



# CARNFORTH TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Working for our Community



## ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2022 - 2023



[www.carnforthtowncouncil.org](http://www.carnforthtowncouncil.org)

Published by Carnforth Town Council, 46 – 48 Market Street, Carnforth LA5 9LB

Tel: 07828 254 419

Email: [clerk@carnforthtowncouncil.org](mailto:clerk@carnforthtowncouncil.org)

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

## TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT

During the last 12 months it has been my great pleasure to represent Carnforth as Town Mayor. The year has witnessed some large and massively successful events.

Early in the year we celebrated the Queen's Jubilee with a street party attended by hundreds of people both from within Carnforth and further afield. On behalf of the Town Council, I presented commemorative memorabilia to every school child in Carnforth, judged shop window displays, fancy dress competitions as well as performing myself as part of the musical entertainment!

Later in the year we all came together to mourn the Queen's passing and mark the transition to our new King with an ancient tradition of 'proclamation' kept alive in Carnforth and pronounced by our Town Crier.

VE Day and Lancashire day have been celebrated with gatherings at the Memorial gardens, but the highlight of my year was the marking of Remembrance Sunday. It is always heartwarming to see so many people, young and old, gather to remember the men of Carnforth who lost their lives in the two World Wars. It was a real privilege to lead the parade and then lay a wreath on behalf of the Town Council.

At the beginning of the year I set out with many ambitions, some of which have been achieved and some not. In particular, I had a desire to raise the understanding of the importance of civic service amongst our young people. I attended events at all of our schools and preschool groups and talked about the role of the Mayor and Town Council. I also served the town on a more practical level by supporting individuals who approached me directly for help as well as carrying out tasks such as litter picking, weeding and refurbishment of our much-used benches.

So, although not all of my plans came to fruition [it's amazing how quickly 12 months fly by], I do hope what I have achieved has contributed to making Carnforth a better place to live, visit and do business.

Everything that I have done has been backed up by a team of dedicated and enthusiastic Councillors and officers and I would like to take a moment to reflect on what the Town Council has accomplished as a whole. After many years of preparedness, the Town Council triggered its emergency plan twice during the year, supporting residents during a period of loss of mobile network coverage and

again during the big freeze and subsequent loss of water supply. The plan gives an option of opening the Civic Hall for emergency sanctuary although on these occasions this was not needed.

The Town Council has now firmly established film nights at the Civic Hall which are very well attended. With the offer of food and liquid refreshments, the nights have become firm favourites in the calendar and provide opportunities to socialise as well as to watch recently released films.

We have also trialed, this year, a live theatre event, and "*The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*" was well attended and enjoyed. We hope to run similar events in the future.

The Town Council has taken over responsibility for the management and maintenance of Crag Bank Village Hall and has carried out significant improvements to the fabric as well as to the hall booking system. We have also recently taken over the running of the allotments on the Highfield estate. Balancing the Town Council's plans for 2023/2024 against severe budgetary pressures has been a massive challenge this year. As you will all have seen, energy costs have rocketed putting real pressure on the running of our civic buildings. Despite this, and our continued commitment to improving life within Carnforth and Crag Bank, we have restricted the rise to the precept as far as has been practically possible recognising how difficult times are for all of our residents.

It really has been an action-packed year but my sadness at coming to the end of my term of service as Mayor is softened by the fact that the role now passes to a very safe pair of hands. I have no doubt that Councillors Grisenthwaite [Mayor] and Jones [Deputy Mayor] will do an excellent job of carrying forward the Town Council's ambitions in the coming year.

I cannot end without recording my thanks to our Town Clerk, Bob Bailey, who has moved mountains to make the year successful, to Rik Marsden who manages the Civic Hall and Crag Bank Village Hall keeping them clean, tidy and ticking over and to Terry Allum [now succeeded by Simon Jobling] who have supported events and who keep Carnforth looking so welcoming to visitors.

Finally, a big thank you to you all for your warm smiles, your words of thanks and for making Carnforth a great place to live!

**Councillor Chris Smith, 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.

We continue to work closely with the City and County Councils to ensure that the views of our residents are taken into account when determining planning-related and highways issues and with Carnforth Integrated Care

Community on health and wellbeing matters.

We promote and advocate on behalf of our town in a variety of other ways including representing our local community during the planned closure of Barclays Bank and traffic management arrangements when the essential roadworks on Scotland Road were being carried out.

The TD&P Committee is dedicated to developing and maintaining our town and improving the wellbeing of our community,

In 2022/2023 we ran highly successful community events, notably the ambitious Carnforth Platinum Jubilee weekend and the Great Big Green Week, as well as the regular Remembrance Day Parade and Service and other civic events.





# PROPERTY & ENVIRONMENT (P&E) COMMITTEE

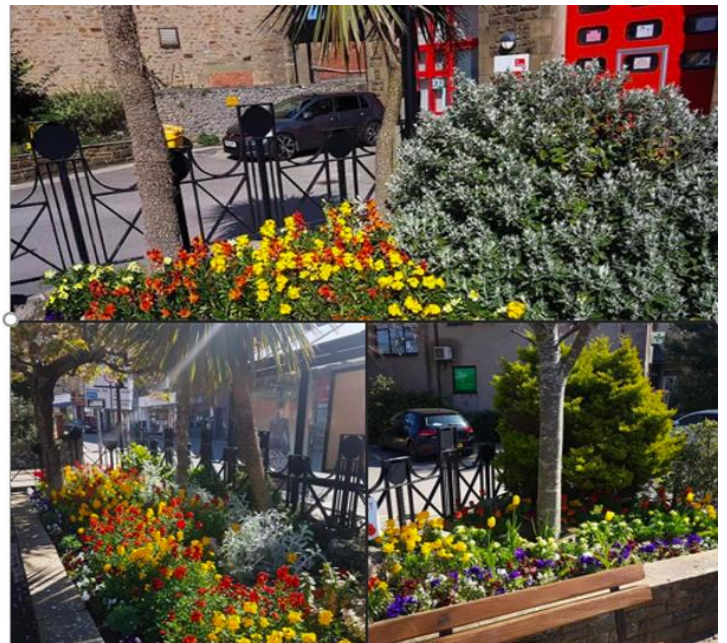
The Property & Environment Committee is responsible for all of the Council's assets, including the management and safeguarding of essential community assets such as Carnforth Civic Hall and Crag Bank Village Hall and the War Memorial Gardens.

We maintain public rights of way, footpaths, open spaces, flower beds and numerous planters and street furniture around the town, including the 'train' on the A6 at Crag Bank roundabout and the 'two owls' at the top of Hawes Hill.

Maintenance programmes 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.

Towards the end of the municipal year, we worked closely with allotment holders to ensure a smooth transition as the management and administration of the Carnforth (Highfield) Allotments came under the Council's control. Going forward, we will maintain and improve on the many benefits of the allotments to the wellbeing and health of our residents.





# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2023 / 2024

I am very much looking forward to serving as Town Mayor during 2023 – 2024. There are a lot of challenges that lie ahead for our Town but equally there are a lot of opportunities. In order to be successful in meeting the challenges and taking full advantage of the opportunities we will need to hone our communication skills and learn more about the benefits of community engagement.

Carnforth's standing in the eyes of Lancaster City Council and Lancashire County Council has risen significantly in recent years through the diligent and professional approach of the Town Council. We have worked collaboratively and successfully with both Councils on a number of projects recently (e.g., public events, planning and highway improvements) demonstrating we are a "can do" organisation. I intend to build on our positive reputation for the benefit of the whole community by taking forward and developing our existing projects and pursuing some new initiatives.

Our Neighbourhood Plan has recently been adopted after five years hard and extensive work and it will form the basis for considering all future developments connected with Carnforth. 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 examples above show that good communication and community engagement have already produced positive outcomes for Carnforth. Looking ahead, the Eden Project at Morecambe offers a huge opportunity to Carnforth for business and workforce development as well as tourism and infrastructure improvements. We will have to lobby hard for our Town if we are to seize this once-in-a-generation chance of transformation. This is an opportunity for us to grow our own talent and skills; I want to give our young people the confidence that they can find jobs and homes in Carnforth and not have to move away for work and affordable housing.

Ours is a vibrant town with lots of hardworking people who have ambitious ideas. Clear and unambiguous communication is essential if we are going to see Carnforth prosper but better community engagement is a crucial first step. We need to bring people together to harness those ambitious ideas so that we can speak with focus as a united community. I promise that I will do my bit as Mayor this year to get that message across to as many people as possible. **Councillor Jim Grisenthwaite**

## 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 2022/2023, we supported the following projects:

Organisation	Amount	Project Description
Friends of Crag Bank Play Area	£ 500	Contribution to Play Area Project
Carnforth Swimming Pool	1,500	Carnforth Community Pool extension
Carnforth Rangers	£ 1,000	Contribution to new goals & fencing
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 3,000</b>	

## CARNFORTH TOWN COUNCIL SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

<p><b>SERVICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bus shelters</li><li>• Street furniture</li><li>• Footpaths &amp; Open Spaces</li><li>• War Memorial Gardens</li><li>• Planters; Flower beds and maintenance</li><li>• Litter &amp; Dog waste bins</li><li>• Community Benefit Fund</li><li>• Planning &amp; Traffic related matters</li><li>• Carnforth Civic &amp; Crag Bank Village Halls</li><li>• Facebook/Twitter/Website</li><li>• Carnforth Express Newsletter</li><li>• Emergency Planning</li><li>• Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan</li><li>• Community consultation</li><li>• Carnforth (Highfield) Allotments</li></ul>	<p><b>ACTIVITIES &amp; EVENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remembrance Day &amp; National events</li><li>• Carnforth Street Festival</li><li>• Film Nights</li><li>• Live theatre</li><li>• Hall Hire</li></ul> <p><b>COLLABORATION WITH OTHERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Carnforth Allotment Association</li><li>• Carnforth Integrated Care Community</li><li>• Carnforth Chamber of Trade</li><li>• Carnforth Rotary &amp; Twinning Association</li><li>• Salvation Army – Carnforth Branch</li><li>• Lancaster City Council</li><li>• Lancashire County Council</li><li>• Local schools and churches</li><li>• A variety of Community groups</li></ul>
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# 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. It is also responsible for 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](http://www.carnforthtowncouncil.org)

The Council's finances are monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Town Clerk, Bob Bailey, acting in his statutory role of Responsible Finance Officer. The Committee considers monthly bank reconciliations and financial monitoring reports and makes recommendations 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.

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## MONEY MATTERS

Recently you will have received your Council Tax bill for 2023 / 2024. The bill sets out how the money we pay will be 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. Then come the Police and the Fire Services. Finally, it shows how much you pay for Carnforth Town Council - a minnow by comparison to the others.

Carnforth Town Council set its Precept – the proportion of Council Tax that is received by the Town Council – at £101,275 for the 2023/2024 financial year.

This means that the average Band D household will contribute £56.74 annually (£1.09 per week) to the precept, a rise of £4.82 on last year (9.28%).

**So, what does the precept pay for?** The Town Council uses the precept to provide several functions and services – such as those managed by the Town Development & Planning and Property & Environment Committees as set out in this Annual Report.

The Council contributes funding and support to a variety of community groups such as Carnforth Chamber of Trade, Carnforth Rotary, Carnforth & District Twinning Association, Carnforth Carnival Committee, Carnforth Wombles, Carnforth Cricket Club, Carnforth Rangers and the Friends Groups of Crag Bank and Canal Turn Play areas.

We have built on our ability to be more efficient and effective in serving our local community

through modern technology and kept our residents and local community up to date with news and useful and supportive information – and there has been a lot of it - through our website and social media platforms and the pages of the popular *Carnforth Express*.

Looking ahead, the recent announcement of Government funding for the Eden project in Morecambe also has exciting implications for Carnforth. The project has the potential to bring considerable prosperity to the whole of the North West.

We will continue to seek opportunities to secure spin off benefits for the town. This will involve further strengthening our already excellent working relationships with Lancaster City and Lancashire County Councils and working with Eden Project, Morecambe and other key stakeholders.

Very few people would dispute that the last few years have been the most difficult in recent living memory. Despite this Carnforth continues to go from strength to strength and the Town Council will continue to work diligently on your behalf.

Our planning for 2323/2024 has considered the impact of the 'cost of living' on our finances; our plans to maintain or enhance current services, activities and community assets and to build on our capacity to improve our resilience and deliver our ambitious plans and aspirations for the Town as set in the Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan – and all for around £1.09p a week!



# CARNFORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Carnforth Town Council is delighted to announce that the Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) has been formally 'made' following a referendum on Thursday 26 January. 87% of residents who voted said 'Yes' to the question 'Do you want Lancaster City Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Carnforth to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'



The adopted CNP is the culmination of a great deal of work over almost five years and the Town Council is very proud of the final product. It has been developed to enable our community to take greater control over the type and scale of development and land use in the town and to promote measures and aspirations to protect our heritage, to tackle climate change, traffic management and air quality and to provide us with greater influence on our local economy and tourism.

The adopted Plan will be the basis of all future Town Council considerations, alongside the Lancaster District Local Plan, for the development and expansion of our town, The Plan sets out our vision, objectives and aspirations and its implementation will be regularly monitored and reviewed. We would like to thank the local community, Lancaster City Council and everyone who has helped to reach this important milestone.

Neighbourhood planning is a key component of the Government's Localism Act. It devolves greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods, giving local people rights to shape the development of the communities in which they live by taking a more active role in the development of planning policy at a local level.



## COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS 2022 / 2023

Meetings	Town Council	TD & P Committee	P&E Committee	F&G Committee
<b>Number held</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
Larry Branyan (Resigned 08/22)	2	1	3	3
Kath Bromilow	3	-	6	-
Chris Hanna (Co-opted 12/22)	4	2	3	4
Paul Gardner	4	1	4	6
Jim Grisenthwaite	7	4	5	10
Elizabeth Jones	8	1	-	8
Rowland Parker	6	10	8	3
Ian Laurence (Co-opted 12/22)	3	4	4	1
Chris Smith	8	9	3	4
Paul Turner	6	6	-	-
Bob Roe (Co-opted 12/22)	4	-	4	1
Malcolm Watkins	8	9	-	-
Steve Watson	5	-	0	-

# 2023/2024 COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR

All meetings of the Council and Committees are open to the public – see the 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](http://www.carnforthtowncouncil.org)

2023/2024	Town Council	Town Development & Planning Committee	Property & Environment Committee	Finance & Governance Committee
MAY	17 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>
JUNE	21 <sup>st</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>
JULY	19 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>
AUGUST	No meeting	7 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>
SEPTEMBER	20 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>
OCTOBER	18 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>
NOVEMBER	15 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
DECEMBER	20 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>
JANUARY	17 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>
FEBRUARY	21 <sup>st</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>
MARCH	20 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>
APRIL	17 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>

## TOWN COUNCIL STAFF & MEMBERS 2023 / 2024

Position	Name	Email	Telephone
Town Clerk	Bob Bailey	<a href="mailto:clerk@carnforthtowncouncil.org">clerk@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07828254149
Admin Officer	Leah Longhorn	<a href="mailto:admin@carnforthtowncouncil.org">admin@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07846245544
Facilities Manager	Rik Marsden	<a href="mailto:rik.marsden@carnforthtowncouncil.org">rik.marsden@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07858769524
Caretaker – Crag Bank Village Hall	Julie Cox	c/o <a href="mailto:clerk@carnforthtowncouncil.org">clerk@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07961784856
Outdoor Maintenance Officer	Simon Jobling	<a href="mailto:simon.jobling@carnforthtowncouncil.org">simon.jobling@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07581447914
Town Mayor	Jim Grisenthwaite	<a href="mailto:jim.grisenthwaite@carnforthtowncouncil.org">jim.grisenthwaite@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07710864904
Deputy Town Mayor	Elizabeth Jones	<a href="mailto:elizabeth.jones@carnforthtowncouncil.org">elizabeth.jones@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07738134262
Members	Chris Hanna	<a href="mailto:chris.hanna@carnforthtowncouncil.org">chris.hanna@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07308121931
	Paul Gardner	<a href="mailto:paul.gardner@carnforthtowncouncil.org">paul.gardner@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07846309944
	Rowland Parker	<a href="mailto:rowland.parker@carnforthtowncouncil.org">rowland.parker@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07776228950
	Ian Laurence	<a href="mailto:ian.laurence@carnforthtowncouncil.org">ian.laurence@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07419772468
	Bob Roe	<a href="mailto:bob.roe@carnforthtowncouncil.org">bob.roe@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07872824802
	Paul Turner	<a href="mailto:paul.turner@carnforthtowncouncil.org">paul.turner@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07830 537565
	Steven Richmond	<a href="mailto:steve.richmond@carnforthtowncouncil.org">steve.richmond@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	
	Chris Smith	<a href="mailto:chris.smith@carnforthtowncouncil.org">chris.smith@carnforthtowncouncil.org</a>	07775817854
	Vacancy	Carnforth Ward	
	Vacancy	Crag Bank Ward	