



CARNFORTH TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2020 -2021

Serving our community



ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2020 - 2021

(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 very first 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 2020 – 2021. We hope that you find it useful and informative.

To say that the last year has been challenging would be an understatement, and we all know that it has been desperately sad for so many. But, true to form, the Carnforth community, residents, businesses and Carnforth Town Council - quickly came together providing much needed support and friendship during these unprecedented and challenging times.

I have had the privilege to serve as your Town Mayor for two years – rather than the usual one – as the Council felt that with the onset of the coronavirus pandemic and the lockdown that followed in March 2020, my continuation for another year would provide business continuity that we knew would be needed in the coming weeks and months. Little did any of us know then that we would still be feeling the impact of Covid-19 a year later!

From the very beginning we have been delighted to support the Carnforth & surrounding areas Covid-19 support group who have provided daily assistance with a whole range of services from errands such as shopping, collection of medical prescriptions and dog walking or simply being a friendly voice on the end of a telephone!

Carnforth Town Council believes that, as residents ourselves, we know our community best, but we also recognise that, through collaboration with the district and county councils, Carnforth Integrated Care Community and other partners, we are well placed to support them in building stronger, healthier and fairer communities.

So throughout the pandemic we have worked alongside them, even acting on their behalf to help residents and businesses with covid related advice, information and grants.

The Director for Communities and the Environment at Lancaster City Council, Mark Davies, recently tweeted: *@CarnforthTC provides the example of why and what can be achieved for a community. Community engagement, clear vision, positive working with partners = Outcomes, outcomes, outcomes!*



In November 2020, we accepted on behalf of the Carnforth community a certificate from the High Sheriff of Lancashire in 'recognition of exceptional service to the community during the Covid-19 pandemic'

In January this year, the Town Council held its own special 'virtual' ceremony to honour members of our community. The Carnforth Citizen of Merit Award was created to recognise all those people who had 'gone the extra mile'. Witnessing how magnificently the community had come together, in a short period of 10 weeks, we received nearly 100 nominations for the award, amongst whom were volunteers, shop workers, postmen, surgery staff and school children!

The ceremony was a joyous occasion, tinged with sadness, for those we have lost including a volunteer and Town Councillor Val Armstrong, who died due to Covid-19.

We were joined on the evening by Mark Davies and the Leader of Lancaster City Council, Cllr Erica Lewis who said *'The Lancaster District is immensely proud of Carnforth Town Council and its community for its remarkable acts of kindness and support of those who have most needed it during the pandemic. Your 'can do' attitude and collaboration with community groups and the City Council has been incentivised like never before to keep our residents safe and well and our businesses supported through one of the most difficult years the country has ever known'*.

Carnforth Town Council has achieved much in 2020 as you will see on the following pages and reports from our three hard-working committees. None of this – including the ability to continue council business remotely via Zoom! – would have been possible without the knowledge, hard work and dedication of our excellent staff and Councillors.

As I come to the end of my term of office, I would like to thank them and everyone in the Carnforth community for an experience that I will never forget! I conclude by paying tribute to Ken Bond who recently died in Glasgow. Ken was Town Mayor on four occasions and dedicated many years serving the Carnforth Community. We will all miss him!

Kath Bromilow MBE, Town Mayor

TOWN DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING (TD&P) COMMITTEE

The Town Development & Planning (TD&P) Committee currently consists of four Councillors and usually meets on the first Monday of every month. The Committee considers planning applications, planning policy and infrastructure matters. All Planning Applications are categorised into those that are non-contentious (those which can be determined under delegated authority), and those that require more in-depth consideration.

Applications are considered by the Committee with input from site visits, the local community and other stakeholders when making recommendations to the full Town Council for approval and subsequent online submission for

decision to Lancaster City Council (the Local Planning Authority).

Carnforth Town Council continues to work closely with District and County Councillors, and officers from both Councils to ensure that the views of our residents are taken into account when determining planning-related matters.

The TD&P Committee is dedicated to maintaining and improving the wellbeing of the community by providing a range of events, services and amenities that benefit the diverse nature of the town and the surrounding area. Below are just some of the things that were achieved despite the unusual circumstances of 2020/2021:



Lest we Forget
Remembrance Day



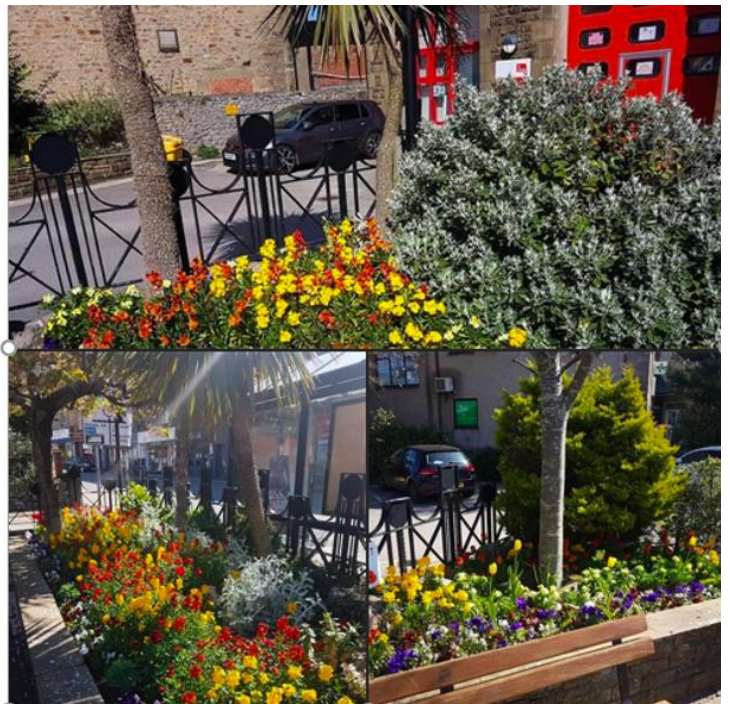
ASSET MANAGEMENT (AM) COMMITTEE

The Asset Management Committee is responsible for all of the Council's fixed assets such as the maintenance of Carnforth Civic Hall, our Council Offices and the War Memorial Gardens, as well as the testing and maintenance of all of the equipment used by our staff.

In the last year, the AM Committee undertook a valuation and assessment of all our assets and established an electronic record of their location and value. They also introduced a maintenance programme that will ensure all our statutory and health and safety responsibilities are met and assets are regularly reviewed to ensure they are safe and in good condition.

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic action has been taken to ensure that our assets complied with government restrictions and for many weeks the Council worked closely with the National Health Service to prepare Carnforth Civic Hall as a vaccination centre. Unfortunately, at a very late stage the NHS decided not to use the building after all. Instead we worked with Lancaster City Council to establish the Civic Hall as a Rapid Test Centre, which started on 9th April 2021 and runs every Friday morning.

The current AM Committee consists of four Councillors who usually meet on the first Tuesday of every month, receiving regular reports from the Civic Hall Manager and the Outdoor Maintenance Officer.



GRANTS

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 2020/2021, we were delighted to support the following projects:

Organisation	Amount	Project Description
Crag Bank Park Group	£ 500.00	Crag Bank Play Area
Friends of Christ Church Primary School	£ 1,000.00	Play Train for School
Carnforth Swimming Pool	£ 2,000.00	Covid Recovery Project
Carnforth Free Methodist Church	£ 1,000.00	Contribution towards Community Hub building project
Total	£ 4,500.00	



CARNFORTH TOWN COUNCIL SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

SERVICES

- Bus shelters
- Footpaths
- Open Spaces
- War Memorial Gardens
- Planters
- Litter & Dog waste bins
- Seating
- Grants
- Planning & Traffic matters
- Carnforth Civic Hall
- Heritage App (in development)
- Facebook/Twitter/Website
- Carnforth Express Newsletter
- Emergency Planning

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

- Remembrance Day
- National Celebrations (i.e. VE Day & Commonwealth Day)
- Heritage Walks
- Carnforth 'Steps into the Light'
- Film Nights
- Carnforth Citizen of Merit Awards

SUPPORTING OTHERS

- Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan
- Carnforth Covid-19 Support Group
- Carnforth Allotment Association
- Carnforth Integrated Care Community



FINANCE & GOVERNANCE (F&G) COMMITTEE

The F& G Committee, consisting of six Councillors, meets on the second Wednesday of the month. Its functions include the consideration of new policies, developing strategy, monitoring the actions of all the committees in delivering the Council's plans (also considered by full Council), oversight of the Council's budgets, accounts, investments and internal controls, along with governance and the HR functions of the Council. Carnforth Town Council is open and transparent about the way it manages its finances.



MONEY MATTERS

In a 'normal' year our income is broken down into the annual precept - an annual sum of money collected with the Council Tax by Lancaster City Council, hiring of the Civic Hall by community groups, conferences and events, like our popular 'Film Night'. We also receive some grants to support community groups and to undertake work on public rights of way.

As the Civic Hall was closed for much of the year hire income has significantly reduced, although this was subsequently supplemented through the successful application for Government business grants that support businesses that have had to close because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The precept for 2021/2022 is £85,599 which equates to less than a £1 a week for a Band D property – an increase of under 1% compared to 2020/2021, despite all the unforeseen challenges that Carnforth Town Council has faced in the last year! This takes account of all the costs incurred in running the Council's services and its assets, including Carnforth Civic Hall and as well as a number of challenging new initiatives, projects and events being planned for the coming year – as well as the ongoing impact of Covid-19. Our plans for 2021 – 2022 had to change very quickly, after weeks of planning due to a very late decision by the NHS that, they would not be using the Civic Hall as a vaccination centre after all!

Information on the way the Council mitigates financial risk and what it has spent money on can be found on the Council website

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 Council appoints an internal auditor who assesses the Council's compliance with relevant legislation and a further audit is carried out by an external auditor appointed by Central Government.

It was testament to Councillors, staff and our budget planning process that we were able to approve both the precept and the budget on time at the January meeting of the Town Council.

As in 2020-21, income from our usual sources will be curtailed due to the ongoing closure of the Civic Hall, but as the 'green shoots' of recovery being to emerge we hope that we can open our doors again in the coming weeks.

We have held a proportion of income "in reserve" to help cover the cost of maintaining and improving on the fabric of Carnforth Civic Hall so that it can be enjoyed by our community for many years to come!

Our reserves also protect the public purse from 'unforeseen'* calls on the budget such as the cost of any by-election due to a Councillor vacancy (*No one expected Covid-19!)

We are also investing in technology in order to make our business more efficient and effective with the benefits of this being seen by Councillors and all our 'customers' through improved payroll and accounting procedures, ordering and invoicing and an online booking system, as well as a re-vamped website that meets all the statutory accessibility requirements.

We also have ambitious plans to take on the running of Crag Bank Village Hall, so that we can provide yet another opportunity for our community to enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of a well-run community hall.

In 2020/2021, we invested time and money into developing our bi-monthly newsletter the *Carnforth Express*. We know from your kind feedback that the reporting of Town Council and community activities, together with information and advice arising from Covid-19 has been useful and appreciated. We will continue to provide, and build on the success of the *Carnforth Express* in 2021/2022 and beyond!

CARNFORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



The Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan is now reaching the final stages and you will soon be invited to comment on it. The plan will affect the whole of the local community and you have a great opportunity to shape where we live now and in the future.

The consultation – that will adhere to Covid-19 restrictions - will commence soon –

PLEASE follow our website and social media pages and check out the *Carnforth Express* for more information. In the meantime, you are invited to take our online survey which should take about five minutes to complete. It seeks to understand residents' views on the decarbonisation agenda and the suitability of some social and technological innovations to decarbonise transport in Carnforth. This work – which will inform, and be a part of, the final Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan – will make it one of, if not THE first such plan to be Carbon Neutral in the country! For more information and to take the survey, please click on the following link: www.carnforthdecarbon8.com

COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS 2020 -21

Councillors	Town Council	TD & P Committee	AM Committee	F&G Committee
No of Meetings Held	10	10	9	10
Val Armstrong	2 (out of 2)	0	2 (out of 2)	0
Larry Branyan	9	5	9	7
Kath Bromilow	9	10	7	8
Paul Gardner	7	0	1	8
Jim Grisenthwaite	10	3	3	9
Tobias Holbrook	8	9	1	0
Elizabeth Jones	8	0	0	9
Rowland Parker	10	9	9	8
John Reynolds	7	0	0	0
Chris Smith	9	9	0	0
Rebecca Stretch (From Feb 21)	1	1	1	0
Malcolm Watkins	10	10	0	0
Steve Watson	10	6	9	9

2021/2022 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

2021/2022	Town Council	TD & P Committee	AM Committee	F & G Committee
APRIL	28 th	19 th	20 th	21 st
MAY	19 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
JUNE	16 th	7 th	1 st	9 th
JULY	21 st	5 th	6 th	14 th
AUGUST	No meeting	2 nd	3 rd	11 th
SEPTEMBER	15 th	6 th	7 th	8 th
OCTOBER	20 th	4 th	5 th	13 th
NOVEMBER	17 th	1 st	2 nd	10 th
DECEMBER	15 th	6 th	7 th	8 th
JANUARY	19 th	10 th	4 th	12 th
FEBRUARY	16 th	7 th	1 st	9 th
MARCH	16 th	7 th	1 st	9 th

TOWN COUNCIL STAFF & MEMBERS: 2021/2022

Position	Name	Email	Telephone
Clerk/Proper Officer & Responsible Finance Officer	Bob Bailey	clerk@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07846256006
Administrative Officer	Vacant	admin@carnforthtowncouncil.org	
Civic Hall Manager	Rik Marsden	Rik.marsden@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07858769524
Outdoor Maintenance Officer	Terry Allum	Terry.allum@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07725616593
Town Mayor	Larry Branyan	Larry.branyan@carnforthtowncouncil.org	01524 37790
Deputy Town Mayor & Chair of TD & P Committee	Chris Smith	Chris.smith@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07775817854
Chair of AM Committee	Steve Watson	Steve.watson@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07581556223
Chairman of F & G Committee	Jim Grisenthwaite	Jim.grisenthwaite@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07710864904
Members	Kath Bromilow	Kath.bromilow@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07843529979
	Elizabeth Jones	Elizabeth.jones@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07738134262
	Paul Gardner	Paul.gardner@carnforthtowncouncil.org	01524 736020
	Rowland Parker	Rowland.parker@carnforthtowncouncil.org	01524733587
	John Reynolds	John.reynolds@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07813117462
	Rebecca Stretch	Rebecca.stretch@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07961043205
	Malcolm Watkins	Malcolm.watkins@carnforthtowncouncil.org	01524 734722
	Ian Betley	Ian.betley@carnforthtowncouncil.org	07919172577

