

Serving the people of Aylesbury

# AYLESBURY TOWN matters

AYLESBURY TOWN COUNCIL MAGAZINE | ISSUE 61 | JUNE 2021





# Welcome



**On behalf of the Town Council, I am pleased to write this welcome page.** This year marks 20 years since Aylesbury Town Council was re-established. Residents campaigned in Market Square and encouraged residents to sign a petition so a Town Council could be established in Aylesbury. This campaign was led by Freda Roberts MBE, who became an Honorary Freewoman of the Parish of Aylesbury Town in 2016 and was supported by a number of people from the town as well as previous and current town councillors.

The petition was submitted to the Government and the permission to form Aylesbury Town Council was then granted. Page 9 outlines our Town Council highlights - we have managed to squeeze a lot into the last two decades!

We're delighted to bring back our **Aylesbury in Bloom Garden Competition** after having to cancel the much-loved competition last year due to the pandemic. The categories have changed slightly but we're still hoping many residents, schools and businesses will enter this year. You can find an application form on page 13.

Our Community News section is packed full of updates from organisations that make our town what it is. **Queens Park Arts Centre** have an extensive programme of workshops, performances, exhibitions and events lined up, **Scannappeal** is hosting three stunning **Open Gardens** nearby to raise funds for life-saving equipment for hospitals in Buckinghamshire and the **Town Centre Partnership** is celebrating the reopening of the town at its market day on 26 June by hosting craft stalls. Be sure to get in touch with them if you are a local crafts business owner. Details are on page 18.

Also in this issue you will find extracts from our **Annual Report**. Despite the challenges the pandemic has presented us with, we are all grateful for the commitment and support from Town Councillors and Council staff. A thank you to them for their work and spirit.

As I write this, we have just announced the cancellation of **Aylesbury on Sea**. An event which usually wows our residents every July but look out for a bigger and better event in 2022. We are still working on **Parklife Weekend** plans, a weekend which brings us Live in the Park and Proms in the Park, so do keep an eye on our social media channels for updates regarding our Bank Holiday event.

Take care and keep safe this summer.

Keith Gray, **Town Clerk**

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Keep up to date with all things Aylesbury Town Council via our social media channels.

@aylesburytc @aylesburytc @aylesburytowncouncil

## CONTACT DETAILS

Aylesbury Town Council, Town Hall, 5 Church Street, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP20 2QP  
Tel: 01296 425678 Fax: 01296 426134 [info@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk) [aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk)

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Aylesbury is twinned with Bourg-en-Bresse

## AYLESBURY TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

### MEETINGS

All meetings of the Town Council and its Committees are open to the public. Dates and times are advertised on the Town Council's website and on local notice boards. Members of the public can address Councillors at the beginning of each meeting.

### COMMITTEES

The Town Council had the following Committees: Grants Committee (Chairperson, Cllr Mark Willis); Direct Services Committee (Chairperson, Cllr Waheed Raja); Planning & Licensing Committee (Chairperson, Cllr Richard Lloyd); Policy Committee (Chairperson, Cllr Richard Lloyd), Finance Committee (Chairperson, Cllr Mike Smith) and Communities Committee (Chairperson, Cllr Tim Dixon). The Town Council reviews the Committee structures and their membership annually.

### ADMINISTRATION

The Town Council's office is located in Church Street, Aylesbury and has 30 employees.

### TOWN COUNCIL FINANCES

The Town Council receives the majority of its funding from the Council Tax, with the remainder coming from allotment rents, cemetery fees and Jonathan Page Play Centre income. A precept of £1,271,994 was raised for the financial year 2020-21 which equated to a Band D payment of £66.59 per year or £1.28 per week. The Town Council's income and expenditure is approved by full Council at each of its monthly meetings. The Town Council retains an independent Internal Auditor. An annual external audit is also conducted. **Special Expenses:** Town ratepayers pay a separate sum to Buckinghamshire Council for services delivered by that authority. These are: community centres, sports facilities, parks and open spaces.

This Annual Report is presented by the Town Mayor, Cllr Mike Smith.

The last 14 months have been a clear demonstration of something I said about Aylesbury in my inauguration speech in 2019 – a town that really knows how to “Be More Kind”. Whether that's people just keeping in touch with their neighbours and helping them out with small but essential tasks or stepping up to volunteer a huge amount of their time and commitment to support the wider community and our essential services – the people of Aylesbury continue to make us all so proud with their response to the continuing challenges.

The huge highlight of the unexpected extension of my Mayoralty was that I was still in the role last December, to cut the ribbon at the opening of Youth Concern's “Next Step” accommodation for homeless young people.

My PA, as ever, was always on call with the right advice and information and resolving those last-minute panics. I would also like to thank Cllr Tuffail Hussain for his continuing support in agreeing to undertake a second year as Deputy Mayor.

Tring Road  
Cemetery  
opened in  
1854



26,000 BURIALS  
have taken place

16,000 GRAVES  
have been prepared

### CEMETERY

The Cemetery has had a busy year due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has seen a rise in the number of deaths, and an increase in demand for new graves, currently at the highest level within the last five years. With the increased number of deaths and demand it is estimated that the current new section will have sufficient grave spaces for 15-18 years. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.

A new pathway has now been completed to remove the damaged ones which were creating a health and safety issue. The Council continues to work hard in finding a solution to the repairs required for the chapels, which are Grade II listed.



### ALLOTMENTS

The allotments continue to be an asset to all who use them. As with previous years all sites are either fully booked or are in the process of being booked. This year has seen an increase in the take up of allotments, and all sites currently have a waiting list. Some of the plots are currently being used to add value to the local community through initiatives such as the food bank and other local community groups.





## GRASS VERGE CUTTING EACH YEAR

9 GRASS CUTS  
for Aylesbury



7 GRASS CUTS  
for villages

Each cut is the equivalent of 379 MILES!

### OUTDOOR TEAM

This has been a remarkably busy year for the outdoor team. Not only has the team continued with their own and devolved works, but they have also been called upon to assist Buckinghamshire Council with their works. This includes the gritting of Bourg Walk, taking on the storage and deployment of the Willows Flood Defence system, as well as a considerable amount of tree work. Street signage has been cleaned systematically in both Aylesbury and the surrounding cluster parishes.



### JONATHAN PAGE PLAY CENTRE

This year has been tough on the education sector due to the pandemic and the changing of regulations governing the childcare sector. Presently, the Centre is operating at less than 50% of its capacity due to the government guidelines in place to ensure we are operating in a COVID-19 safe environment.



At present it is not known how long the restrictions will remain in place, but it is expected to operate with full capacity of 65 children per day from the summer playscheme onwards. Attendance with a limited operation is increasing as the vaccination roll-out is progressing and After-School Club interest is also rising for September.

Cost savings have been made throughout the year where possible and collaborative working is continuing with Buckinghamshire Council. The Centre continues to have an

exceptionally good reputation for providing excellent care and we have seen the number of referrals from the Social Care team and Early Help team increase in the last year.

The pandemic has had a huge impact in nearly everything we do from the simple things like meeting online, officers working from home to the huge pressures on continuing to provide front line services and budget responsibly.

We've seen a number of Councillors retire and their replacements have brought new energy and ideas to the chamber. I'd like to thank all those that have represented their wards and especially those that are planning to retire or don't retain their seats this coming May.



The officers have continued to do a fantastic job in the community. The Outdoor team in particular deserve a special mention for their sensitive handling of the increased workload at the cemetery, manning of the flood defences at the Willows and all of the other tasks that they do in terms of the general maintenance of the town and the allotments.

The Town Council has been able to second staff to help with the pandemic and the Senior Events Officer in particular has had rave reviews in assisting with the running of the vaccination centre at the Guttman Centre.

Underpinning the staff and ensuring the smooth running of the Council as a whole I'd like to thank the Town Clerk for another year at the helm.

The Council itself has, as referenced above, had many challenges, our events programme was curtailed and whilst we were able to use savings for the year to reduce the burden of the pandemic on our resident's precept, we miss being able to bring you those free events for which the Town Council is held in such high regard.

Our contact with outside bodies has increased markedly as we were successful in lobbying for a place on the Aylesbury Garden Town board. The two main projects being the Gardenway and the Town Centre regeneration.

We've seen a significant increase in the number and breadth of meetings involving HS2 and East West Rail. This has involved Council lobbying and the Secretary of State for Transport on the latter to ensure that the Aylesbury spur is completed and working with other local parishes and HS2 themselves over the work that is being carried

out. These discussions target focus on hydrology/flooding, traffic, noise and mitigation.

It is vital for the Town Council to maintain a good working relationship with HS2. As works around the town continue, we've made clear residents' views on ensuring the disruption is kept to minimum and that there is multi-agency joined up planning.

We continue to work closely with the Earnest Cook Trust over plans for a new community sports facility in Aylesbury at the old golf club site in Fairford Leys. This is a project that could transform sport in our town and there have been signs of progress with the land usage and fitting in with HS2 requirements for building the railway. Hopefully it won't be long before we can start to put these plans into action.

The financial figures for the year ended 31 March are yet to be finalised but I am very confident they will show that actual spending was well within our budgeted amounts. Part of the cause of this was, of course, the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic which hugely affected the events programme in particular. Offsetting those expenditure savings was some loss of revenue to the Jonathan Page Play Centre in particular.

We hold earmarked reserves to make sure we are ready to meet any large costs that might only come up every few years (such as election costs, updating our buildings and cemetery improvements).

We also hold general reserves, to ensure we can deal with unexpected events as well as opportunities for providing new and additional services – an important consideration as we hope that talks can make some progress this year with Buckinghamshire Council about future service devolution.

Our current estimate of the general reserves at the end of March 2021 is around £489,326 representing about 27.52% of annual operating expenditure. This percentage is marginally lower than the level it was a year ago, but continues to meet the minimum limit of 25% given by guidance on good financial management for Town and Parish Councils.

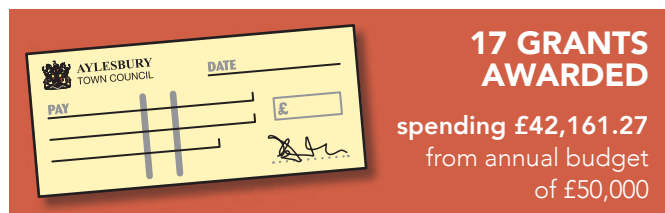
The Coronavirus situation will of course continue into at least part of this (2021-22) council year. Some of its effects will result in loss of income, some in increased costs and some in reduced costs. The overall impact on our reserves and the Council's operating position will need to be planned for and considered during the process of monitoring the current year out-turns against our budget, and the new Council setting its budget for 2022-23.

Our internal and external audit reports for the previous year, and the auditors' fieldwork carried out regularly on our processes and controls, were once again highly satisfactory. This confirms the professionalism and dedication of the Clerk and all of our staff responsible for our finances.

The Town Council would like to pay tribute to two women who have been stalwarts of the grants committee for many years. Former inaugural Town Councillor and Mayor Jenny



Puddefoot, who chaired the grants committee for many years and worked tirelessly to ensure that organisations in our town were well served by the committee. Cllr Ranjula Takodra MBE, former Mayor, has similarly served her community, always willing to challenge applicants to make sure that every opportunity to help residents was taken, her knowledge and humanity are greatly valued. You will both be missed on the Town Council.



In common with many committees 2020-21 is a year like no other, the effects of the pandemic on organisations have been profound, community groups have been hit by the whammies of massively falling revenue, and massively increasing demand. The committee has seen only one sports grant awarded as most sports have been suspended, the volume of small general grant applications has similarly declined due to the suspension of activities, but the effect of the funding that the committee has been able to award I believe has been greater.

We have supported applications that will make a long term difference to residents lives for years to come, such as the Bedgrove Guide and Scouts hall purchase and renovation. We have seen many applications for mental health services provided in the town. That need now appears to be acute due to lockdowns and pressure on services, environmental applications are also on the list as the awareness of environment on residents becomes clearer.



The decision-making process is rightly vigorous, the grants committee is only funded by the Aylesbury Council Taxpayer, the committee must be certain that our residents are getting value for money, particularly from organisations outside the parish boundary, but who serve Aylesbury Town residents, applicants are asked about this issue so we can

be as certain as possible about the value to our residents of any scheme.

Thank you to the Grants Committee Clerk who provides a brilliant service to both the committee and applicants. This support has been invaluable.

The Town Planning and Licensing committee, which meets every two weeks, has again managed to get through a significant workload as the expansion of Aylesbury and conversions of existing buildings have impacted the committee and its work.

The Aylesbury Garden Town and the Gardenway have involved many meetings with members of the Garden Town team and their consultants, Urban Movement, as both elements take shape. We are hoping to see a set of design principles published that we can also refer to when considering applications.

We've had the usual range of applications to consider from the new multi-house developments to the mix of extensions and alterations. We've noted an increase in the number of applications for studies and other home working spaces and would expect this to continue.



Of all the areas of the Council, the work of the communities team has probably been the most visibly affected by the pandemic. The nature of the work of the communities team and the committee has changed over the last 12 months and has adapted to respond to the changing needs and landscape of the town.



The work of the council on Dementia Awareness in Aylesbury has continued through the great work of our Dementia Champion. Our annual accreditation for 2020-2021 as a Dementia Friendly community was successful, and we have seen the number of Dementia Friends rise since March 2020 by 127 to 2552. Our Dementia Friendly Champion has hosted 12 Dementia Friends sessions to the public and other organisations including the Skipton Building Society, Southcourt Baptist Church, and the relatives and families of the Bartletts Care Home.



Additional work and collaboration has continued with the creation of the Bucks Dementia Friendly Alliance & Communities engagement group which has provided a virtual space in Bucks including members in Wendover, Wycombe, Chepping, Buckingham, Marlow, and Aylesbury Town.

Town Council events over the past 12 months have been affected and as a highly visible element of what we do, and do so well, they have been missed. However, the team have adapted and responded to the changes and they have produced, and supported, an excellent range of events.

Highlights include the Key Worker Duck Trail which was a fantastic way to highlight the gratitude towards our key workers whilst engaging with local businesses and producing a safe family friendly event that promoted a strong sense of community whilst engaging with the public in a new and interesting way.

The team's work towards supporting the Community Radio Christmas Toy Box Appeal was a fantastic example of how this Council can support residents through the communities team. The Town Council is grateful for the part that the staff and volunteers played with the appeal.

Our senior events officer provided advice and guidance to the North Aylesbury Churches team for the organisation of the Drive in Carol service. The churches were exceptionally grateful for the support and guidance provided during the planning and subsequent cancellation. Sadly, this event was cancelled less than 12 hours prior to the service taking place. But from this we have been able to work with another area of our community.

Over the last 12 months the Communities team have themselves volunteered and worked locally for the community with a variety of groups including Enrych and the vaccination centre.

New to the post in August 2020, our Marketing and Communications Officer has improved and streamlined the Council's social media presence on various platforms.

The Council's Facebook reach rate has increased by 49% compared to August 2019 to February 2020.

The Youth Town Council has continued to meet via Microsoft Teams. Zahra Hussain represented the Youth Town Council on the International Young Mayors Group



## OUR SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS



Facebook  
**+23%**

@aylesburytc



Twitter  
**+4%**

@aylesburytc



Instagram  
**+20%**

@aylesburytowncouncil



LinkedIn  
**+32%**

aylesburytowncouncil

and Meiyang Jiang represented the Youth Town Council on the Aylesbury Community Board which is fantastic and has provided a fantastic experience for both Councillors. The benefit of recruitment and from the talks provided to schools and youth groups has been successful in attracting a new Councillor from The Grange School.

This has been a challenging year for all of our residents. The Council has been able to adapt its work to respond to the changing environment and provide tangible benefits to the town and supporting our communities. We have shown as a Council, Councillors, staff team, and volunteers the role that we can play and the importance of a strong, Town Council with a focus on community and improving the lives and providing opportunity for all, while being able to work collaboratively outside of the town with the county and region.



## A GLIMPSE INTO AYLESBURY'S REMARKABLE HERITAGE

We hope you are aware of **Heritage Open Days**, England's largest festival of history and culture, bringing together over 2,000 local people and organisations and thousands of volunteers across the country. Every year in September, lots of places throw open their doors to celebrate their heritage, community and history. It gives the public a chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences – and it's all **FREE**.

Aylesbury Town Council has been coordinating these unique and insightful events across the town since 2015. With behind-the-scenes access to the Waterside Theatre, Bucks County Museum tunnels, the Mayor's Parlour, the hidden water-well under Market Square, tours of the Old Court House, Judges' Lodgings and Tring Road Cemetery as well as trips to St Mary's bell tower, to name just a few. Heritage Open Days in Aylesbury will take place on **11-12 September 2021**. As the area coordinators, we would like to help local businesses, charities and organisations develop plans and ideas to create a memorable experience for visitors and ensure that they are COVID-flexible, by weaving online opportunities with in-person event plans.

2021 aims to be the biggest collection of open buildings in the town to date, in a celebration of our history, heritage, community and spirit, as we all look forward to getting back to a new normal. Heritage doesn't have to mean old – it is anything that celebrates our town, its buildings, its people and its culture. If you're interested in exploring opportunities that could encourage more visitors to your Aylesbury business and take advantage of the national and local publicity that this campaign generates then please email [ruth.mayhew@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.mayhew@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk) to discuss options and ideas.

We will of course keep you informed of the fantastic line-up of open buildings and free activities on offer much closer to the time. It is hoped that lots of these will be in-person events, but only time will tell.



heritage open days

## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

**My unexpected second year as Mayor was a very different one, probably very different to anything any previous Mayor of Aylesbury has experienced.** But in its own unique way it was very satisfying and a cause for my pride in our town to grow even greater.

There were some new skills I had to learn quickly, like chairing a meeting while sitting in front of a screen in my own living room. Without the usual 'body language' cues you pick up from being in the same room as everyone, keeping track of who wants to speak can be a lot more difficult.

Most Mayoral engagements also went virtual during this last year. Making a speech to a live audience had become a fairly comfortable task for me but making a speech to a screen full of separated faces (often, and unnervingly, that included seeing my own looking back at me!) brings its own difficulties. Certainly, some of my usual habits like making expansive arm gestures and pacing back and forth around the stage would have fallen completely flat if I tried them in this 'new normal' situation!

Even the small number of 'live' engagements I got to do during the summer of 2020 were different. I had to make sure I committed my speeches to memory rather than reading from notes, as often I would turn up and find the logistics of the event or size of the venue meant everyone including myself had to wear face coverings. As many of you will know only too well, wearing a face mask plus glasses inevitably means steamed-up glasses making it impossible to read what's in front of you.

The huge highlight of the unexpected extension of my Mayoralty was that I was still in the role last December, to cut the ribbon at the opening of Youth Concern's "Next Step" accommodation for homeless young people, alongside (but of course at a 2 metre distance from) their brilliant new CEO, Hannah Asquith.

Having supported this project since my first ever deputy Mayoral engagement in May 2018, I was thrilled to be there to see the outcome of such hard work and commitment by so many people becoming a reality. Once again huge thanks to all Councillors, staff and members of the public who have supported my fundraising efforts for my charity.

My PA Sue Carpenter, as ever, was always on call with the right advice and information and resolving last-minute panics – although the questions tended to be more along the lines of "What's the Zoom login?" rather than the previous "Where am I supposed to be tonight and where's the car parking?". And of course, holding her phone camera incredibly steady while filming me for a number of YouTube and social media videos, which became quite a feature of this past year.

I would also like to thank Cllr Tuffail Hussain for his continuing support in agreeing to undertake a second year as Deputy Mayor.



My biggest thanks of all must go to the Mayoress, Kerrie Jackson. Although I'd resisted putting myself forward for the Mayoralty for many years, making my choice to get involved in local politics meant that for me, it was always a possibility. Kerrie has taken on the role with enthusiasm, grace and good humour and been a constant support to me all through the last two years.

Stepping down from not just the Mayoralty, but from this Council after 20 years, and 28 years after first being elected as a Councillor in Bristol, will feel strange. I'm definitely going to take a break from local politics but I think it's inevitable I'll be drawn back into it sometime in the future. Many Councillors in the town and further afield have become friends as well as colleagues, and in quite a few cases that's despite differences of political viewpoint, but the mutual respect is no less. Town Councillors take on a tough and sometimes frustrating job, for minimal reward and usually nowhere near enough thanks and appreciation, so here are my thanks to all of you who have served with me on the Town Council.

The last 14 months have been a clear demonstration of something I said about Aylesbury in my inauguration speech in 2019 – a town that really knows how to "Be More Kind"\*. Whether that's people just keeping in touch with their neighbours and helping them out with small but essential tasks, or stepping up to volunteer a huge amount of their time and commitment to support the wider community and our essential services – the people of Aylesbury continue to make us all so proud with their response to the continuing challenges.

CLlr Mike Smith  
Aylesbury Town Mayor 2019 to 2021

*\*A reference to one of my favourite songs, Be More Kind by Frank Turner. Look it up on YouTube, Spotify etc, it really sums up what I've been trying to highlight about the town's response to an incredibly challenging world.*



# 20 YEARS OF **AYLESBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

In 2001, Aylesbury Town Council was re-established. We have served the community for 20 years in a number of ways to ensure that the town has a voice and that, in the responsibilities we have, we can do what is best for Aylesbury. We continue organising a whole host of fun-filled community events, expanded on our allotments, built and maintained invaluable connections with local businesses and communities plus much, much more.

During the 1990s, members of the community stood in Market Square most weekends until the required number of residents had signed the petition asking for a Town Council to be established. This campaign was led by Freda Roberts MBE. Some of the people who petitioned for a Town Council became Town Councillors and we still have one of them on the council who remembers the time before. Cllr Denise Summers who, along with other members of the Town Council, is still passionate about the work we do, the services we provide and our representation of the town. The petition was submitted to the Government and Aylesbury Town Council was created.

We wanted to take you through our 20th birthday timeline to look back on some of our highlights.



## 2003

We take over **500 allotment plots** across six sites from Aylesbury Vale District Council. We have a vision that by 2007 we will have 700 plots to let. Currently, we look after seven sites and 708 plots.



## JULY 2005

We hold our first ever **Aylesbury on Sea** event in Vale Park. This event has proved more and more popular year on year.



## APRIL 2007

We take responsibility for **Tring Road Cemetery** from Aylesbury Vale District Council and make improvements. The cemetery is a beautiful haven steeped in history.



## 2008

Our **Outdoor Maintenance Team** is formed. The outdoor staff take on a number of improvements to the town including path clearing, hedge cutting, pollarding and lifting of trees.



## 2009

We introduce sports grants to our **grants programme** to support and encourage young people to fulfil their sporting potential.

## MAY 2001

After dedicated campaigning, **Aylesbury Town Council** is formed following local elections.

## JUNE 2005

**Aylesbury in Bloom** first launches and encourages residents to get involved with a variety of categories including Patio Garden, Formal Garden and Window Box. The free competition is open to all residents, schools and organisations in the Parish of Aylesbury.



## MAY 2006

Our first issue of our quarterly magazine, **Aylesbury Town Matters**, is published. All 61 issues have been distributed to doorsteps within the Parish of Aylesbury and have been designed by local business, Bluepepper Designs.



## MAY 2007

We purchase **5 Church Street**, in Aylesbury Old Town, which becomes our new Town Hall home and offices. We are still situated there 14 years later.



## 2009

We acquire **Walton Pond** after it was left in a state of neglect. Since then, our Outdoor Maintenance Team work hard to maintain it by removing unwanted weeds, clearing algae and cutting back reeds.



## JUNE 2012

Street party entertainment is offered to mark the **Queen's Diamond Jubilee** for those organising a celebratory event down their road. A balloon modeller, magicians, jugglers, face painters and even a visit from the Town Mayor was on offer – all free of charge.

## AUGUST 2014

Guillaume Lacroix (Mayor delegated to Culture and the International Relations), Gérard Lora-Tonet and Martine Desbenoit (Municipal Councillor) and Marie Vincent from our twin town of Bourg-en-Bresse enjoy their visit to Aylesbury and strengthening the **Aylesbury Twinning Association** relationship.



## AUGUST 2015

Hobble on the Cobbles – an event which began in the 70s – and Proms in the Park amalgamate to create a live music family festival extravaganza – **Parklife Weekend**.

This event attracts 7,000 people in 2015. Fast forward to Parklife's 2019 event and Live in the Park and Proms in the Park attracts 17,000 people.



## MAY 2016

**Freda Roberts MBE** is awarded the title of **Honorary Freewoman of the Parish of Aylesbury**. Freda has been Mayor of Aylesbury three times and led the campaign for Aylesbury Town Council to form. England footballer **Ellen White** is also awarded the title of Honorary Freewoman of the Parish of Aylesbury.

## DECEMBER 2016

**Aylesbury Youth Town Council** is created for young people from the ages of 10-19 years. As of today, the Youth Town Council is made up of 10 inspiring individuals who want to make a difference within our town.



## AUGUST 2017

We receive the first ever **Fair4All Event** award by Buckinghamshire Disability Service in recognition of the efforts made to ensure our events are as accessible as possible.



## MARCH 2011

We join the **social media** world to engage with residents and push our work out to the community. We now have over 13,000 followers across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

## MAY 2014

**Emmerson Boyce** and **David Stopps** are awarded titles of Honorary Freeman of the Parish of Aylesbury. Mr Stopps has been responsible for Friars Music Club for many years. Mr Boyce led Wigan Football Club to a remarkable victory beating Manchester City in the FA Cup Final in 2013.



## APRIL 2015

Our **Outdoor Maintenance Team** takes on a number of services such as weeding, tree works, sign cleaning and grass cutting under the Bucks County Council Devolved Services Agreement. We continue with this work and carry out work for several neighbouring Parish Councils.

## 2016

We introduce **wellbeing grants** to our grants programme. The grant funding is to help and support the social and emotional wellbeing needs within our town's diverse communities.

## AUGUST 2016

Aylesbury Town Council take over the **Jonathan Page Play Centre** from Aylesbury Vale District Council and provide an after-school club and holiday playschemes for children. Jonathan Page worked as a playworker at Manor House Hospital working with children with special needs. We're delighted to provide this valuable service to our community, which achieved an Ofsted "Outstanding" rating in 2018.



## MAY 2017

The **Aylesbury Dementia Alliance** is formed. Members of the alliance are instrumental in changing the way their group or organisation operate to ensure it was a dementia-friendly space. Now known as Dementia Friendly Aylesbury, our Dementia Champion has created over 2,500 Dementia Friends since its launch.





## and then 2020 came...

The coronavirus outbreak hits the UK. Town Council meetings are held via Zoom, Council staff work from home, there is a high demand for allotment sites and events are cancelled and reimagined virtually.

But, government guidelines permitting, the **Jonathan Page Play Centre** remains open for Keyworker children, the **Cemetery** also remains open to those who wish to visit, our **allotments** are open so our allotment holders could relax in their outdoor space, **grants** are still being given to groups and projects and our Outdoor Maintenance team continue to keep our town in the best shape it can be. Like the rest of the world, we adapted. The ball didn't drop.

## DECEMBER 2019

The **Outdoor Maintenance Team** take responsibility, in partnership with Buckinghamshire Council, for deploying the flood defence equipment at the Willows Estate, working with Bucks Council officers and members of the local community and volunteers. We are responsible for the storage of the equipment and its maintenance.

## DECEMBER 2020

Through various lockdowns and tier changes, we were able to collect 4,202 toys and give them to local charities, groups and organisations through our **Community Radio Christmas Toy Box Appeal**.



We recognised local key workers through our **Aylesbury Key Worker Duck Trail**. Over 60 nominations were entered and the winning six were handpicked by the Town Mayor. We would like to say a huge thank you for your support over the last 20 years. We love serving you, the people of Aylesbury, every day.

**Ofsted**  
Outstanding  
Provider



# Jonathan Page play Centre



### Spring is finally here... and we're back at the Jonathan Page Play Centre!

We're busy sprucing up the centre with some lovely spring planting. Not only have we planted primroses, daffodil and tulip bulbs outside in our new colourful pots, but we also planted them in our big planters in the play area. We had a sea of colour once the first rays of sunshine came out, which cheered us all up, especially as some of us haven't seen each other for a long time due to the school closure.

Now that we're all back, the JPPC team are busy enhancing the outside play area for us, so we have even more play and development opportunities. We loved the mud kitchen they created last year and we really would like another one, so fingers crossed our wish may come true.

We also heard the team whisper something about a new creature which may make the garden its new home. We wonder what it may be?! We will definitely let you know once we find out!

During the Easter holidays we had a brilliant time, making lots of springtime arts and crafts and playing games again with our friends. As the weather was good, we spent a lot of time outside looking for ladybirds, playing football, tennis and seeing who can go round the go-kart track in the fastest time.

We are already counting down to the summer when we can spend even more time at the centre, having lots of fun, during the **Summer Playscheme**, which runs from **22 July to 1 September**. The team have lots of great things planned for us. Topics will be making friends, holidays, play and explore, afternoon tea, fashion and design, walk on the wild side and going back to school. Why don't you give them a ring or send them an email to find out more and see how you can join us? We always love making new friends and showing you what a great time we have at JPPC.

We want to thank Beccy, Hannah, Fezi, Mary, Lisa and Karen for looking after us so well and for making sure we are always having a great time. 😊



## AYLESBURY TOWN RECEIVE RECOGNITION FROM ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY

**Exciting news! Dementia Friendly Aylesbury received a "Working to become a Dementia Friendly Community" accreditation from the Alzheimer's Society for a fifth consecutive year.** To receive this accreditation, Aylesbury Town Council was assessed on their dementia work within the community, which is led by Dementia Champion and Communities Officer, Benedicta Lasoye. The ongoing work helps people to connect with a condition that is likely to impact us all in our lifetime - personally or by association. Reducing the stigma associated with dementia has always been a driving force within the Town Council's work, and one conversation at a time, this is happening in Aylesbury town.

Dementia Friendly Aylesbury has received support and collaborated with local organisations and groups including Waterside Theatre, Skipton Building Society, Aylesbury Market Traders, Aylesbury Library, Metro Bank, Bucks Museum, Friars Square and Hale Leys retail management, Thames Valley Police (Aylesbury), Vale of Aylesbury Housing and Aylesbury Waitrose.

By delivering information sessions to younger people in Aylesbury schools and colleges, 'new teachers' and advocates of the Dementia Friends initiative have been created. We also support groups and businesses who want to know how they can make positive changes to a person with dementia and the people who care for them - from changing opening hours, to making signage clearer all of these small actions make a huge difference.

Find out more Dementia Friendly Aylesbury at [bit.ly/DFAYlesbury](https://bit.ly/DFAYlesbury). If you or someone you know might need dementia support, contact the Dementia Connect Support Line by calling **0333 150 3456** or visit [alzheimers.org.uk/dementiacconnectfaq](https://alzheimers.org.uk/dementiacconnectfaq). For support for carers contact Carers Bucks by calling **0330 777 2722** or visit [carersbucks.org](https://carersbucks.org).

Join us online over the coming months for our public Dementia Friends sessions. All sessions start at 7pm.  
**Monday 14 June | Monday 13 September | Monday 18 October | Monday 8 November | Monday 13 December**  
Visit [bit.ly/DFSessions2021](https://bit.ly/DFSessions2021) to reserve your free place.

Dementia Friendly Aylesbury delivered over 95 sessions which has led to the creation of more than **2,500 Dementia Friends**.

## THE JOYS OF THE HUB

**We've all faced many challenges in the past year. For me, as Aylesbury Town Council's Events Officer, one of the toughest tests was how to continue providing for our community through national lockdowns.** Normally, my year would be filled with planning and delivering the Town Council's programme of free community events. But that hasn't been the case for the last year. Instead, I have turned my hand to several rewarding projects including cooking meals for Aylesbury Vineyard and helping run two community support Facebook groups alongside my role with the Town Council.

But January brought my biggest reward to date, when I joined the volunteer management team to assist at the mass vaccination hub based in the Guttman Centre, led by Dr Sajid Zaib and Group Commander Dean Elliott, Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. It has been a true honour to be part of a dedicated team who are working tirelessly to vaccinate our community.

Each shift is filled with a menagerie of selfless individuals who are all generously giving their time to do their bit for our community. It takes 8 carparking marshals, 13 patient guides, 18+ vaccinators, 8 pharmacists and an army of 20+ administrators to run a 5 hour shift with the capacity to vaccinate around 1,000 people. That's 65+ phenomenal human beings, all working together to bring the nation back to normal. Oh, and that's in addition to the site manager, duty managers and doctors!

It's my privilege to work directly with the volunteer patient guides - the Orange Army - as we affectionally call them. With 13 on shift at any one time, the pool is made up of over 35 unique individuals who bond to bring comfort, safety and reassurance to all of the Hub's visitors. It's my "job" to ensure the Orange Army are happy which, in turn, ensures our visitors are happy. Being part of this team brings a multitude of joys - the joy of teamwork, the joy of giving to our community, the joy of connecting, the joy of meeting so many people with caring souls, the joy of solving the hiccups that cross our paths and most importantly the joy of giving joy to others.

Thank you to everyone who has helped our community receive their vaccine. My message to the Orange Army - It is in the darkest of times when the stars shine brightest, thank you for your bright kindness and being the stars in our sky.

Ruth Mayhew, **Senior Events Officer**



Ruth at the Hub on Red Nose Day





## LOVE YOUR RIVERS

Do you exercise along one of our lovely local rivers, or are you planning for a holiday at the seaside as COVID restrictions are relaxed? If so, perhaps you could spare a thought for what you flush down the loo and where it ends up.

There are many sources of pollution which impact on our rivers and beaches, including run-off from agricultural industries and roads, as well as sewage wastewater discharges. This is a big issue for us to solve on our own, but we can all play a part by looking after our local water resources. Aylesbury sits at the top of the River Thames catchment, so anything people can do to help here will have the greatest impact downstream.

**How can you help?** The most essential thing to remember is that only three P's should go down the loo - pee, poo, (toilet) paper! Wipes flushed down toilets cause serious problems in the sewerage systems, contributing to fatbergs which cause blockages and sewage overflows and has a major impact on the environment.



The River Thames Conservation Trust has compiled a page of top tips for protecting your local freshwaters - [riverthame.org/advice/households](https://riverthame.org/advice/households) - with advice on everything from disposing of sanitary products, reducing microplastic pollution from your clothes wash, and how to check whether your house drains are correctly connected. By following this advice you'll help keep our rivers and beaches healthy and clean of pollution, making your walks and holidays so much more enjoyable.



**You might have noticed our town signs have had a bit of a spring clean.** Our Outdoor Maintenance team have been out and about adding sparkle and shine to road signage as well as cutting back overgrown plants and bushes to ensure they can still be seen. We think they look much better!

## IS SOIL A DIRTY WORD?

**My soil is certainly sticky.** I have to scrape it off the spade every few minutes as I dig trenches for this year's early potato patch. The blade slides in smoothly once it has been cleaned, and the soil crumbles nicely as I fold it over. Lots of worms wriggle out. I'm pleased to see them because they actually help to make soil.

Of course, I have to provide them with some raw material to work on, so this patch was covered in a layer of home-grown compost over the winter. It didn't look as neat as my neighbour's plot which is entirely covered with plastic sheet all winter, but at least my soil organisms could breathe, grow and do their stuff.

I call it my soil, but it isn't really mine. I rent it from the Council at an annual rate of about 20p per square metre. I've had this plot for ten years now, and, with luck, will still be gardening it in ten years' time. Over the years I've added lots of compost over the cold winter months and liberally spread grass cuttings as a mulch in the hot summer. The worms have food all year round.

It doesn't mean that my soil is perfect. It only digs easily in early spring or autumn. It's far too claggy in winter (can't get it off the spade) and too hard in summer (can't get the spade into it). The many stones make digging difficult and give the carrots and parsnips interesting shapes.



*Early potatoes sprouting through stony soil*

Unlike a lot of my fellow-gardeners, I dig as little as possible, leaving the worms in peace. So proper digging (which leaves some worms in pieces) only happens every four years when it's a patches turn to host potatoes. Other crops (beans, squash, cucumber, lettuce etc.) get dug in with as little disturbance as possible and liberal helpings of chicken manure pellets. The result is eight beds which sit higher than the grass paths which separate them, a contrast to many other plots around whose beds sit lower than their surroundings. As well as growing lots of food, I appear to be growing soil!

But is my soil dirty? It certainly sticks to me. I'm only allowed to garden in old clothes, and they sometimes get thrown away when they are stiffly full of soil. But my potatoes come cleanly out of the dry summer soil, and it feels and smell delicious on my hands.

So, although soil makes things dirty, that doesn't necessarily make it unclean.

**Michael Brimicombe**





**Are you involved in a local community group or charity in Aylesbury?  
Would you like to promote your work and events?**

This magazine is delivered to every household in the Parish of Aylesbury. For more information call Rachel **01296 425678** or email [rachel.noon@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.noon@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk)  
There is no charge for community groups and charities.



**AYLESBURY TOWN WI**

**You are still able to join us, come along once to meet us virtually and join if you would like to.** There is still lots of things going on. We hope by the summer we will be able to meet again in person. For now, we meet on Zoom on the third Thursday of each month.

We've had some really interesting speakers, pouring a glass of wine, sitting comfortably on the sofa and singing along to songs from the musicals was great fun. The Beetle Drive introduced some healthy competition.



Our weekly coffee mornings are on Zoom, changing to different times so ladies who work can join in as well. The craft group have made some amazing projects keeping busy through the last few months.

Our WhatsApp group is always full of chatter and our morning song gets us dancing in the kitchen with our morning cuppa. We are planning trips for the summer, Leonardslee Gardens with an afternoon tea afterwards and hopefully a trip to the Mill at Sonning.

Several of the members have been volunteering at the vaccination centre over the last few months. The ladies who enjoy knitting having been busy making things for Stoke Mandeville NICU and maternity unit. We continue to support Aylesbury Women's Refuge with donations of things that they need.

[buckinghamshire.thewi.org.uk/find-wi/aylesbury-town](http://buckinghamshire.thewi.org.uk/find-wi/aylesbury-town)

**AYLESBURY SCOUTS**



**We prepare young people with skills for life. But who supports the volunteers who make this happen? People like you.** You can inspire, motivate and plan ahead. You'll enjoy working with adults and young people in the Aylesbury area and seeing the impact of your efforts. You'll be organised, diplomatic and know how to get the best out of people.

We're not going to pretend this is easy. This is a big role. With big rewards. And because you believe in the power of Scouting to help more young people, you'll know it's all worthwhile.

Sound like you or somebody you know? Great. Let's talk. Contact Katharine at [vacancies@bucks-scouts.org.uk](mailto:vacancies@bucks-scouts.org.uk) for a chat about volunteer vacancies in the District of Aylesbury.



**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
ADULT LEARNING**

**INSPIRING LEARNING, CHANGING LIVES**

**The part-time, autumn term course programme from Buckinghamshire Adult Learning is now live on their website at [adultlearningbc.ac.uk](http://adultlearningbc.ac.uk).**

With a broad programme of over 1,500 part-time courses and workshops, delivered online and from multiple locations across Buckinghamshire, there is something to suit everyone. Courses will range from one-day to one-year, and cover beginner through to advanced levels, offering daytime and evening flexibility.

Part-time courses include: English, ESOL and Maths, Digital Skills, Employability, Cookery and Cake Decorating, Crafts, Creative Writing, Drawing and Painting, Digital Photography, Floristry and Flower Arranging, French, German, Italian and Spanish, Pilates, Yoga and Tai Chi, Pottery, Practical Gardening, Sewing, Sign Language, Stained Glass, Wine Appreciation, Woodwork.

Classes allow students to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence in an environment where both tutors and learners offer support and encouragement.



**Have you had your COVID-19 vaccine?** Please give us your views on how things went by completing our survey. Or perhaps you've been invited but decided not to have it? Please tell Healthwatch Bucks more about your choice by completing a short survey.



Take the COVID-19 vaccine survey online by visiting [bit.ly/HealthWatchBucksVaccineSurvey](https://bit.ly/HealthWatchBucksVaccineSurvey). You can answer as a relative or carer on behalf of someone else. We will write reports based on what people tell us. Your responses will be summarised in the reports. We will share our findings with the Bucks organisations involved to highlight any way in which the vaccination programme could be improved. We will also publish the findings on our website. This survey does not collect any data that can be used to identify you. Therefore, please do not include any personal information like names or detailed health notes in the free-text responses.

We're sorry that we can't send out paper copies at the moment but if you leave a message for us on **01844 348 839** we will call you back and take your answers over the phone.

## CarersBucks

### CARING FOR CARERS IN BUCKS

**At Carers Bucks we've been busy continuing to support unpaid carers as we move cautiously towards a gradual lifting of restrictions.**

At this time of year, our thoughts turn to Carers Week, so please keep an eye on our Facebook and Twitter pages to see what we've planned for the week.

This year the theme is Making Caring Visible and Valued – a message that's more important now than ever before. Every day we see the amazing support that carers give to the person they care for and we know how vital it is to ensure carers are well supported in their caring role.



We've delivered virtual workshops on topics as diverse as Mindfulness, Lasting Power of Attorney, Nutrition, Understanding Stress and Anxiety and Emergency Planning, plus the chance to get

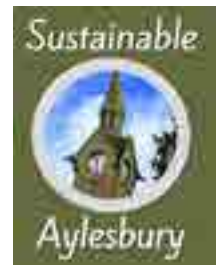
together for an online chat, with optional tea and cake! If you like singing, join our Carers Choir.

Our team is on hand to answer your questions, signpost you in the right direction and offer a listening ear, whether you're just starting out in your caring role or whether you've been a carer for many years. If you're a carer, we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch on **0300 777 2722** or [mail@carersbucks.org](mailto:mail@carersbucks.org) or via our website: [carersbucks.org](https://carersbucks.org)

**Could you be our next Trustee?** Are you able to volunteer your time and expertise to support unpaid carers? Join our Board to help maximise the impact of our work: [carersbucks.org/trusteerecruitment](https://carersbucks.org/trusteerecruitment)

## INTRODUCING SUSTAINABLE AYLESBURY

**Hands up if you're trying to live in a more planet-friendly way, ditching the plastic and reducing your carbon footprint where you can?** We're imagining a whole lot of arms waving frantically across Aylesbury right now!



Sustainable Aylesbury is a new local group with the vision for Aylesbury to evolve into a more sustainable community, harnessing the power of working together to take action against climate change. We think that local action can make an impact, one act at a time. Anyone is welcome to join us and share their ideas about how we can do this.

We would love eco-friendly living to be the norm, and to start with we've been building a directory of local businesses and groups which operate in a sustainable way. We're making it easy to discover eco-friendly products and services in and around Aylesbury – just check out the directory on our website.



We're also working with Buckinghamshire Council's Aylesbury Community Board to promote Sustainable Smart Swaps – big and small changes we can all make to live in more climate-friendly ways. We have put together some tips and advice on how to do this, and by heading over to the website, signing up and commenting with what you're doing to live more sustainably you could be in with a chance of winning some zero waste goodies!

Go to [sustainableaylesbury.org.uk](https://sustainableaylesbury.org.uk) for more information on Sustainable Smart Swaps and to view the local directory.



## BE INSPIRED AND GET INVOLVED

Transitions UK is an exciting charity working to support vulnerable and disadvantaged young people aged between 14-25 years old, to make an effective and positive transition to a happier, more inclusive and more productive life as young adults.

We provide vital support through positive relationships tailored to each individual in need through mentoring, befriending and guidance, whilst helping them learn and achieve the skills they need to find their place in society. We provide this service through 4 projects:

- Attain:** supporting young people leaving care, towards independence
- Achieve:** supporting young people with learning disabilities and special needs
- Aspire:** supporting young people at risk of offending or re-offending
- Affirm:** supporting young people with emotional issues or mental health problems



Each young person is matched with up to three mentors of various life and education skills, who provide support in the areas of: personal development, work, education, therapeutic input, confidence and self-esteem.

What the young people need more than anything is positive role models and support. The Attain project are looking for volunteers of all ages to support our programme - we need mentors, ambassadors, fundraisers, promoters and volunteers to deliver workshops.

Attain currently operates in Aylesbury as well as Milton Keynes, High Wycombe and Chesham. If you would like to be a part of the Attain project and make a positive impact on young people's lives, please get in touch by contacting us on **01582 380620** or by email at **support@transitionsuk.org**.

In March, local charity Community Impact Bucks held the first Buckinghamshire Women in Charity Awards to raise awareness of the many inspirational initiatives led by and involving women in the county. Some of this incredible work is being done in Aylesbury and the efforts of several women in the town were recognised by the Awards which were announced on International Women's Day.

Winning the Outstanding Leadership category, April Benson of **Aylesbury Women's Aid** was chosen for her work highlighting domestic abuse, leading the development and delivery of innovative programmes for women and girls.

Another local winner was Hannah Asquith of **Youth Concern** who won the 'Trailblazer' category after fundamentally changing service delivery, establishing new outreach services, new online delivery, care packages and counselling sessions.

Aylesbury's volunteers were also celebrated with Sue Severn, Chairman of **Watermead Parish Council**, receiving a Highly Commended award for her role as the driving force behind 'The Watermead Volunteer Army', a community group providing services such as prescription collections, grocery shopping for the elderly and those in isolation.

You can find out more about the work of these women and others on the Community Impact Bucks website: **communityimpactbucks.org.uk/case-studies**.

If you are inspired by their stories and would like to volunteer, set up or get involved with a voluntary group in Aylesbury, get in touch with Community Impact Bucks to find out how to take the next steps. Call **0300 111 1250** or visit **info@communityimpactbucks.org.uk**.



**Buckinghamshire's Family Information Service has a brand-new website and directory making it even easier for families, parents to be, children and young people to find local support, activities and childcare.** The new website not only has a new look and feel but lots of the latest information from the team and experts within the council. Head over to **familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk** to take a look and find:

- support available to help with issues affecting your family
- what's on at family centres
- things to do and holiday activities
- support and inclusive activities if your child has SEND
- childcare and early years providers

Follow '**BucksFamilyInfo**' on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram for the latest news affecting families and young people, local things to do and helpful reminders for all sorts of parent tasks like applying for childcare and school places.

## OPEN GARDENS FOR SCANNAPPEAL

**TYRINGHAM HALL** Cuddington, Aylesbury HP18 0AP  
2 July, 2-5pm

Clever planting of herbaceous borders, mixed with perennials, shrubs and climbing plants around the three lawns leading down to a natural spring fed duck pond.



This is a gorgeous historic garden with unrestricted views of the Buckinghamshire countryside. Relish and enjoy! £7 in advance only. Visit [scannappeal.org.uk/event/tyringham-hall-open-garden-2](https://scannappeal.org.uk/event/tyringham-hall-open-garden-2) to book.

**BLEDLOW MANOR** Bledlow HP27 9PB  
9 July, 2-4:30pm

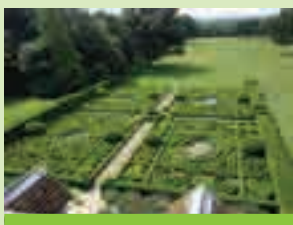
Set in the Chiltern Hills near Princes Risborough, these are the private gardens of Lord Carrington, designed by Robert Adam. Beautiful walled kitchen garden, herbaceous borders, water garden, parterres and many contemporary sculptures.



We are also offering a pre-bookable traditional afternoon tea, contact us [bht.info.scannappeal@nhs.net](mailto:bht.info.scannappeal@nhs.net) or call us **01494 734161** for further information. £7 in advance and £7.50 on the gate. Visit [scannappeal.org.uk/event/bledlow-manor-open-garden-3](https://scannappeal.org.uk/event/bledlow-manor-open-garden-3) to book.

**TYTHROP PARK** Kingsey, Aylesbury HP17 8LT  
15 July, 2-4:30pm

A stunning garden not to be missed. Ten acres of gardens surrounding a late 17th century Manor House (not open), set within 60 acres of parkland. The gardens have recently undergone some major changes, with a hard landscape design by Robert Myers incorporated within the old walled area. For brave visitors, there is a viewing tower to look across the striking walled garden. £7 in advance only. Under 12s free of charge. Visit [scannappeal.org.uk/event/tythrop-park-open-garden-2](https://scannappeal.org.uk/event/tythrop-park-open-garden-2) to book.



## AYLESBURY AWAKENS FOR BUSINESS

**The sun is shining, the birds are singing and the sound of people's voices and laughter are slowly returning to the town.** Lockdown has been exceptionally hard for so many people including all the independent businesses throughout the town.



From mid-April businesses began to reopen their doors and welcome the public back into their establishments.

Work has been undertaken to improve the town with extra planting, window wraps and glorious displays of hanging baskets. Many cafés and restaurants have outside seating encouraging people to enjoy alfresco time and meet up with friends as COVID rules allowed groups of up to six people.

As the town has reopened there is a plethora of street entertainment lined up for every Saturday between 11:30am-2:30pm in the town centre, alongside specialty markets. See [visitaylesbury.co.uk](https://visitaylesbury.co.uk) for more details.

To celebrate reopening there will be craft stalls joining the main market on **Saturday 26 June**. If you would like to trade, please email [diane.harrison@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:diane.harrison@buckinghamshire.gov.uk) for more information. The town will be celebrating on that day with businesses joining in with bunting and balloons. Now more than ever we need to shop local and support our businesses.



## ATTENTION: ALL CHARITABLE OR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS IN AYLESBURY!

**We award grants that will benefit the town and its communities.** Grants can be awarded to fund projects or activities as well as projects working in Aylesbury to improve public wellbeing. There are also grants to support young sports people representing their sport at a national or international level to help them achieve their potential.

We have recently given grants to...

### FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE HOSPICE CHARITY

We awarded **£4,000** towards Florence Nightingale's Hospice at Home service, FNH@Home. FNH@Home aims to improve the charity's capacity to enable patients to stay at home and be cared for nearing end of life.

### LINDENGATE MENTAL HEALTH CHARITY

We gave a Social & Emotional Wellbeing Grant of **£2,000** towards site maintenance costs, providing bespoke short programmes and a new focus for young people, including a peer support programme at Lindengate. The natural beauty and richness of the site helps to restore and heal, whilst specialist gardening, conservation, construction, cooking, and nature-based arts and crafts activities provide focus and purpose.

### THE DUCKLINGS TRUST

The Ducklings Trust received a grant from us for **£2,000** for a new birthing pool at the maternity unit in Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

### THE PACE CENTRE

The Pace Centre supports a very vulnerable group of children and youngsters with neurodisabilities, including CP and other motor related disorders. We granted **£3,720** towards the cost of a Learning Support Assistant supporting the service of a Music Therapist to deliver music therapy lessons.

### YOUTH CONCERN

We awarded Youth Concern a Social & Emotional Wellbeing Grant of **£8,000** towards the supervision, counselling co-ordinator and overheads to continue the free counselling provision for 13–25 year-olds. For over 40 years, Youth Concern has supported young people across Aylesbury. Last year, 473 young people visited the Drop-in Centre on Whitehill Lane. In addition to other services – emotional support, help with education, training and employment, food and care parcels, advice about sexual health and substance misuse, and accommodation support, 50 of those young people received counselling.

The next Grants Committee meeting will take place on **Wednesday 23 June 2021**. The deadline for grant applications to be considered at this meeting is **Wednesday 9 June 2021**.

For more information on how to apply for an Aylesbury Town Council grant visit [bit.ly/AylesburyTownCouncilGrants](https://bit.ly/AylesburyTownCouncilGrants) or email Jane Eden, Grants Officer [jane.eden@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:jane.eden@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk) or call **01296 425678**.



## QUEENS PARK ARTS CENTRE

Aylesbury's Queens Park Arts Centre (QPAC) is set to reopen this spring, with an extensive programme of workshops, performances, exhibitions and events lined up following closure during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Though having maintained a busy online profile during the lockdowns, QPAC is relishing the chance to welcome attendees back to the venue, which has undergone a transformation since the start of the year with a redesigned logo and branding, plus a brand-new website and box office system.



The Centre's busy roster of weekly workshops resumes from **17 May**, with COVID-secure mitigations in place to ensure students, tutors and staff remain safe on site. There are a wealth of topics to try – from ceramics and sculpture to painting, drawing, needlework, dance and music. Classes are perfect for beginners looking to take up a post-lockdown hobby!

June sees the return of **Bucks Art Weeks** and to celebrate their reopening QPAC have six wonderful artists exhibiting their work for free between **12-27 June**. Work on display will include fine art, pottery, stone carving and handmade jewellery.

For full information about what's on at Queens Park Arts Centre this season, head over to [queensparkarts.com](http://queensparkarts.com) or look up [@queensparkarts](https://www.facebook.com/queensparkarts) on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

## OPEN WEEKEND 22-25 JULY – EVERYONE WELCOME



**This summer we are inviting everyone to come and get involved in creative and cultural activities delivered by organisations, charities, businesses and groups across the county.** We will be promoting a 4-day programme of activities themed to stories and we want everyone to come along and be part of it! Taking place across Aylesbury (and beyond) there will be lots of activities available.

Over a long weekend this summer, Buckinghamshire Culture are co-ordinating a celebration of creativity, culture and stories. Organisations, groups and businesses across Buckinghamshire will contribute events to create an exciting and varied programme of story-themed activity for people to join in with. We hope to see workshops, talks, walks, demonstrations, open days and many more things that you can enjoy or have a go at!

In 2021, Open Weekend will have the theme of stories – sharing and celebrating stories our personal stories, and those of Buckinghamshire itself, in creative ways. This links to our literary heritage and aims to encourage people to think about the stories that are all around us every day.



Look out for Open Weekend updates on our website: [buckinghamshireculture.org](http://buckinghamshireculture.org) Twitter: [@BucksCulture](https://twitter.com/BucksCulture) Instagram: [@Bucks\\_Culture](https://www.instagram.com/Bucks_Culture) and using the hashtag [#BucksOpenWeekend](https://twitter.com/hashtag/BucksOpenWeekend)

For any organisations, charities or groups keen to join in with Open Weekend, please see our website for details on how to get involved: [buckinghamshireculture.org/open-weekend](http://buckinghamshireculture.org/open-weekend)

Buckinghamshire Culture and Buckinghamshire Council are working in partnership to deliver Open Weekend. This programme is supported by Arts Council England.



The essential station for the county, Bucks Radio, launched in February, filling a much-missed void delivering local news and travel, championing local charities, supporting local business and entertaining the local masses with a must-listen-to mix of local current affairs, forthcoming events and the ultimate music playlist from 60s through to latest chart toppers.



Home-grown broadcaster Richard Carr has joined forces with co-founder Nathan Cooper who has been behind the mic as the voice of Bucks for over 20 years. Together with the rest of the team the station offers over 40 years of industry experience and are proud to be able to serve Aylesbury and the surrounding areas.



Presenters many already know and love include Ben Moseby who starts the day in style with Ben's Big Breakfast, the Bucks Radio baton is then passed to Nathan Cooper from 10am for mid-morning before Nia Visser takes to the mic for afternoon antics. Bucks Radio has a free to enter What's On guide on their website [www.bucks.radio](http://www.bucks.radio) enabling local charities and non-profit organisations to promote their activities and events taking place in the community.

The Bucks Radio News team would love to hear from you as well. If you are doing something in the local community or raising money or awareness then get in touch and they will help spread the word. Call **01296 929888** or email [news@bucks.radio](mailto:news@bucks.radio). Bucks Radio is there for you, the local community of Aylesbury so please make use of them.

## BUCKS MUSEUM – WE'RE OPEN AGAIN

Dinosaurs are coming! This summer's family blockbuster is 'Dinosaurs Uncovered' opening 26 June. This stunning exhibition features skeleton casts and fossils of dinosaurs and other prehistoric beasts. Don't miss this chance to discover prehistoric creatures on your doorstep.



Exciting new galleries opening this August. Discover Bucks – explore the story of Bucks people and landscapes from 200 million years ago to today. Our fantastic new permanent galleries are packed with objects and stories to delight and amaze.

The Museum in the heart of the Old Town has a lovely walled garden to relax in and café serving light refreshments. The Museum Shop is also a great place to buy cards and gifts. Just drop in.

Check our website for booking information, charges, opening times and what's on. Find us at Bucks Museum, Church Street, Aylesbury, HP20 2QP or online at [buckscountymuseum.org](http://buckscountymuseum.org)



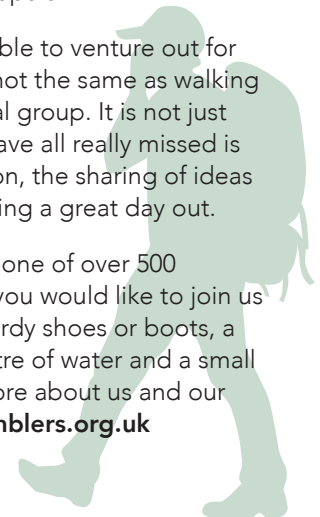
## AYLESBURY & DISTRICT RAMBLERS

By the time you read this we should have had the go-ahead from the Government to resume our full walking programmes here at Aylesbury Ramblers. The trees will be in full leaf, the spring flowers will have come and gone, but with any luck we will have a full summer of unrestricted walking to look forward to.

In pre-COVID times we organised about 120 walks a year. We are now looking to resume this ambitious programme. We normally offer two to three walks a week, everything from four to 16 miles. Some are short and leisurely, some are long and strenuous, but the majority are somewhere in between. Some walks may even conclude with an optional pub lunch, which was always very popular.

Whilst, individually, we have been able to venture out for exercise during the lockdown, it is not the same as walking regularly with our friends in our local group. It is not just about walking together. What we have all really missed is the companionship, the conversation, the sharing of ideas and experiences and above all, having a great day out.

We are a friendly and active group, one of over 500 Ramblers' groups across the UK. If you would like to join us on a walk all you need are good sturdy shoes or boots, a waterproof, a small rucksack for a litre of water and a small snack for a short break. Find out more about us and our walks at our website: [aylesbury-ramblers.org.uk](http://aylesbury-ramblers.org.uk)





## JUST KEEP SWIMMING

**As we know, staying active is so important for children of all ages and learning to swim is a key life skill for any child.** Swimming lessons teach independence, allows them to get active while enjoying themselves, gives them the ability to get themselves out of potentially life-threatening situations and enables them to enjoy trips to the seaside and beach holidays to the full. However, sadly, many missed out on their weekly swimming lessons during the national lockdowns.

Due to this, **Everyone Active** is urging parents and carers in Buckinghamshire to come forward and sign up for their award-winning swim scheme at Aqua Vale Swimming and Fitness Centre and Swan Pool Leisure Centre.

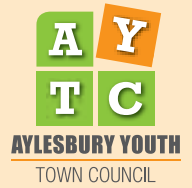
All classes will be held in a COVID-secure environment, and due to class size numbers being reduced, now is a great time to learn and get that much needed guidance. All the swim teachers at Everyone Active's centres are Swim England (or equivalent) qualified and hold an enhanced DBS check.

All children enrolled in the swim scheme will also gain access to Aqua Passport. This is an absolutely brilliant tool for helping keep track of your child's progress through the learn-to-swim scheme. What's more, all children who sign up for lessons will benefit from free casual swimming at both centres all year round.

For more information, please contact [sarahwright@everyoneactive.com](mailto:sarahwright@everyoneactive.com) or head into one of the centres and speak to a member of the team.







## YOUTH TOWN COUNCIL DOING GOOD IN OUR COMMUNITY

**Aylesbury Youth Town Council and Sir Henry Floyd Grammar School launched a food donation project for the Aylesbury Vineyard and Aylesbury Foodbank.**

Now, more than ever, we recognise that food banks across the country have become essential to combat hunger and provide emergency food. As a result of this, with the support from the Floydian students, Aylesbury Youth Town Council collected crates of non-perishable goods to help people who are struggling in the community.

The project lasted around two weeks led by Meiyang Jiang, Elizabeth Sond and Rianna Mistry. The members designed posters that were put up in the school and were responsible for advocating this project through the school bulletin network with the support from Mrs Marlone. Aylesbury Youth Town Council is very proud of this achievement and will continue to engage with different charity works to aid those in need.

Meiyang  
Youth Town Councillor

Follow us on Instagram @aylesburyouthtowncouncil



## YOUTH TOWN COUNCILLORS BECOME DEMENTIA FRIENDS

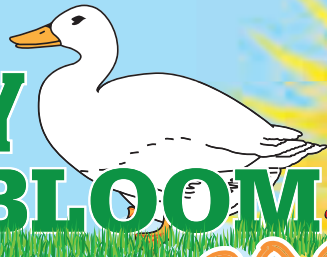
**Youth Town Councillors Zahra, Meiyang and Victoria took some time from their Easter half-term study to become Dementia Friends.** Part of our pledge to this project is to promote intergenerational learning, and we think we managed to do just that! Some thought-provoking questions and some lightbulb moments.

If you know of a school, faith or community group that would like to become Dementia Friends as part of a PSHE topic or would like to be more involved in a community project, please send an email to our Dementia Friends champion at [benedicta.lasoye@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:benedicta.lasoye@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk)



# AYLESBURY

# in BLOOM 2021



Sponsored by

*Michael*  
**ANTHONY**



Show off your gardening greatness by entering Aylesbury in Bloom's annual Garden Competition 2021.

Perfect pruning, fine flowers, pleasing plants and creative colours – just grow with the flow!

We'd love to see what residents and organisations within the Parish of Aylesbury have to offer. It's **FREE** to enter so don't moss around! Get your application form in by **Monday 14 June**. Judging will take place in July and August.

Complete an application form online on our website [aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk) or call **01296 425 678** or email [info@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk). See all terms and conditions plus judging criteria on our website.



**AYLESBURY**  
TOWN COUNCIL

