

Aylesbury Town matters

Aylesbury Town Council Magazine
Issue Two September 2006



Bringing information that matters to the people of Aylesbury

www.aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk



Inside this issue:

Secret Gardens

Aylesbury's secret gardens page 4

St. George's Day

Photos on page 8

R.A.F. Halton

Freedom Parade on page 9

New Mayor

Introducing the new Mayor on page 10

Contents:

	Page
Welcome Note	
Organising an Event	
Grants News	1
Aylesbury Town Councillors	2
Contacting your Councillors	3
Secret Gardens of Aylesbury	4
Guineas and Alcohol for All	6
St. George's Day Parade	8
R.A.F. Freedom Parade	9
New Mayor	10
Introducing Cllr. Jenny Puddefoot	11
Being Mayor Cllr. Denise Summers	12
Annual Report of ATC	13
Aylesbury Town Centre Events	

Contact Details:

Aylesbury Town Council
5 Church Street, Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire HP20 2QP

Telephone: **01296 425678**
Facsimile: **01296 426134**
Email: info@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk

Visit our website:
www.aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk

Opening hours:
Monday - Thursday 8.45 am - 5.15 pm
Friday 8.45 am - 4.45 pm

Front cover photograph courtesy of
Aylesbury Vale District Council

Welcome Note

Welcome to the second edition of Aylesbury Town Matters.

In this issue we have articles about the Secret Gardens of Aylesbury, St. George's Day, and the R.A.F. Freedom Parade marking the 50th Anniversary of the granting of the Freedom of the Town to R.A.F. Halton.

There are introductions to the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and reflections of the retiring Mayor on her term of office. In addition you can find out what is on in Aylesbury town centre over the next few months and some interesting local history. Also, for those of you who like to know what your representatives are doing, there is a report on what the Council did during the Civic Year May 2005 to May 2006.

It is intended that this magazine should be a means for residents to exchange ideas and for groups to communicate with the townspeople. If there is any issue or topic in Aylesbury that is causing you concern, or if you would like to inform others about your activities, please let us know and we shall do our best to help.

We hope you will enjoy reading this issue.

Cllr. Steve Patrick
Leader of the Council

Organising an Event?

If you are organising an event for your community or activity group and would like some free publicity, why not put a notice in 'Aylesbury Town Matters'? If you are interested please contact Margaret Wagstaffe, Town Clerk, at Aylesbury Town Council, 5 Church Street, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 2QP; call on 01296 425678 or email: m.wagstaffe@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk

Grants News

Councillors Joan Poole and Ranjula Takodra presented a cheque for £1,000 to Meadowcroft Pre-School, to take small children from Quarrendon on a grand outing to Gulliver's World. For children from the less affluent parts of our community, for whom an annual holiday is not assured, this is a very special occasion involving, as it does, a coach trip, exploration of the attractions at Gulliver's World and a picnic lunch. Each child has to be accompanied by a parent or volunteer and they have to travel in a specially fitted coach. The Town Council felt that the efforts of all the parents and volunteers in this generous initiative should be supported.



Cllrs. Joan Poole and Ranjula Takodra present a cheque to Meadowcroft Pre-school. Photo courtesy of K. Poole.

Other organisations have also benefited from the Town Council's Community Grant Support Scheme.

£250 was awarded to the Thursday Morning Club. Senior Citizens from Aylesbury, especially those who don't get out much, will have a Christmas gathering with a lunch and entertainment. For many, this Christmas festivity will mean the difference between enjoying Christmas in good company or spending it alone.

A sum of £1,000 was given to Aylesbury Youth Action towards the cost of the AVID programme, a year-long youth-led Community Performing Arts

Project which will cumulate in a three day festival in July 2007.

If you belong to a non-profit making organisation which provides a service for a section of the community, you may qualify for a grant.

Please contact Margaret Wagstaffe, the Town Clerk, at Aylesbury Town Council Offices, 5 Church Street, Aylesbury, HP20 2QP, telephone 01296 425678 or email: m.wagstaffe@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk for application forms or further information.

Bouncing Back - The Trampoline Club



Cllr. Mark Willis and Wendie Sweeting. Photo courtesy of T. Killoh.

Aylesbury Town Council Grants Committee was pleased to present Bucks Bouncers Trampolining Club with a cheque for £1,000 to help the group to survive, after the trampolines the club were using were condemned. Wendie Sweeting, the club coach said "without the help of Aylesbury Town Council the club would no longer be running. It was awful to discover that the trampolines we were using were no longer fit for use, but we now have two brand new trampolines and some big plans for the future". The club will be moving to the new Aylesbury College building in September, with the excellent facilities that the building will provide.

Aylesbury Town Councillors



Cllr.
Julian Newman
Ward: Bedgrove



Cllr.
Alan Sherwell
Ward: Bedgrove



Cllr.
Graham Webster
Ward: Bedgrove



Cllr.
Penni Thorne
Ward: Bedgrove



Cllr.
Steven Mitchell
Ward: Central



Cllr.
Denise Summers
Ward: Mandeville



Cllr.
Niknam Hussain
Ward: Mandeville



Cllr.
Mark Willis
Ward: Mandeville



Cllr.
Roger Surguy
Ward: Gatehouse



Cllr.
Pat Jamieson
Ward: Gatehouse



Cllr.
Tuffail Hussain
Ward: Gatehouse



Cllr.
Jenny Puddefoot
Ward: Elmhurst



Cllr.
Joan Poole
Ward: Elmhurst



Cllr.
Raj Khan
Ward: Elmhurst



Cllr.
Steve Patrick
Ward: Oakfield



Cllr.
Angela Turner
Ward: Oakfield



Cllr.
Freda Roberts MBE JP
Ward: Southcourt



Cllr.
David Ralph
Ward: Southcourt



Cllr.
Zulifqar Ahmed
Ward: Oxford Rd



Cllr.
Mike Smith
Ward: Oxford Rd



Cllr.
Ranjula Takodra
Ward: Walton Court



Cllr.
Ray Ghent
Ward: Quarrendon



Cllr.
Mohammed Nazir
Ward: Quarrendon

Contacting Your Councillors

COUNCILLOR	CONTACT NUMBER	EMAIL
Julian Newman	01296 425678	julian.newman@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Alan Sherwell	01296 420672	alan.sherwell@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Graham Webster	01296 483416	graham.webster@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Penni Thorne	01296 422232	penni.thorne@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Steven Mitchell	01296 392096	steven.mitchell@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Denise Summers	01296 336731	denise.summers@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Niknam Hussain	01296 485847	niknam.hussain@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Mark Willis	01296 586109	mark.willis@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Roger Surguy	01296 432717	surguy@path.co.uk
Pat Jamieson	01296 428275	pat.jamieson@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Tuffail Hussain	0795 626 9544	tuffail.hussain@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Jenny Puddefoot	01296 612461	jenny.puddefoot@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Joan Poole	01296 434971	joan.poole@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Raj Khan	0795 821 4480	raj.khan@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Steve Patrick	01296 424986	steve.patrick@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Angela Turner	01296 425678	angela.turner@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Freda Roberts MBE JP	01296 424452	freda.roberts@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
David Ralph	01296 581975	david.ralph@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Zulifqar Ahmed	0793 194 5804	ahmed.zulifqar@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Mike Smith	01296 421732	mike.smith@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Ranjula Takodra	0795 842 3083	ranjula.takodra@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Ray Ghent	01296 489327	ray.ghent@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
Mohammed Nazir	01296 431722	mohammed.nazir@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk

Contact

If you would like any further information on anything in this magazine, or if you would like to contribute to the next issue, please contact:

Margaret Wagstaffe, Town Clerk, at Aylesbury Town Council Offices, 5 Church Street, Aylesbury, Bucks., HP20 2QP Telephone 01296 425678 or email: m.wagstaffe@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk

and Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Members and Staff of Aylesbury Town Council and Mr G Aylett of Aylesbury Old Town Residents Association for their help in the production of this magazine. Especial thanks go to District Councillor Keith Turner for his article on local history.

Margaret Wagstaffe
Town Clerk

If you don't live in Aylesbury ...

but have received a copy of this magazine, we apologise. The problem is that post codes don't align exactly with town boundaries, so we have a choice: either leave some of our residents without a copy, or accept that some of our magazines will be delivered to people who live outside our boundaries. If that applies to you, please accept this copy with our compliments.

Secret Gardens of Aylesbury

In 1992 an ill-informed MP described Aylesbury as "...the lager-lout capital of Britain".

A group of Old Town residents calmly set about demonstrating that far from deserving this character assassination, Aylesbury Town Centre is in fact a reasonable and civilised place to live, with pockets of remarkable beauty. Their intention was to show that young people drinking in the Town Centre on Saturday evening was not the only aspect of life in the Town Centre!

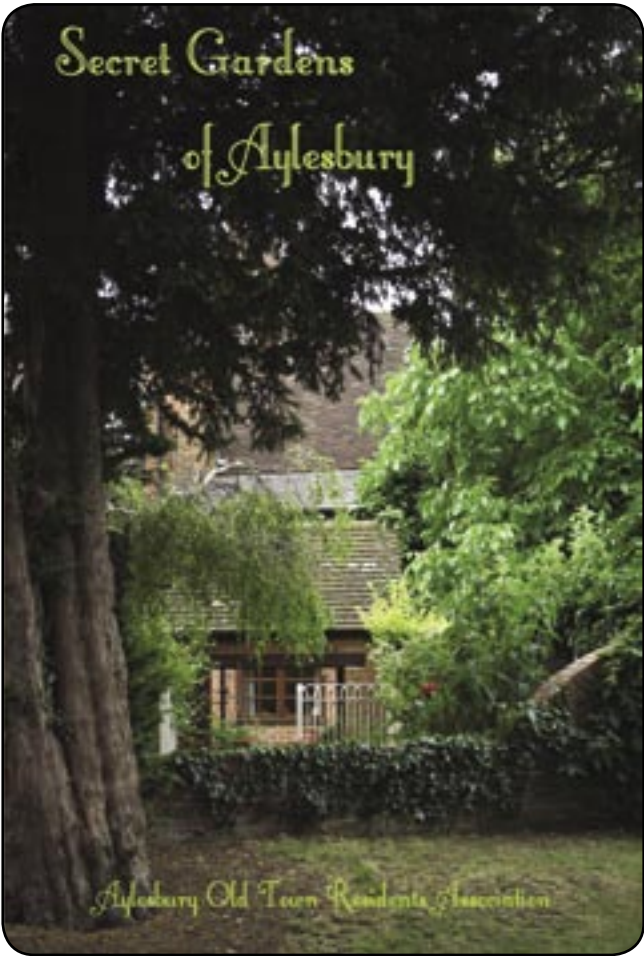
In 1993 the residents organised an afternoon to share their gardens with neighbours, family and friends. It was never their intention to establish a tradition: they were offering a once-only demonstration of a different aspect of Aylesbury Town Centre, but the "Secret Gardens" was so popular that it became an annual event. ESRI, the high-tech company with nation-wide business from its central Aylesbury base, now gives vital and generous support by providing the maps which enable visitors – about 350 this year – to find each "Secret Garden".



The reasons for their success?

See for yourself on the following page.

All photos in this article courtesy of Cllr. Ray Ghent.



More secret gardens on the back page.

Guineas and Alcohol for All

Around Aylesbury...

In the 1800's and during the first few years of the 19th Century, at election time, it was customary to bribe Aylesbury voters with guineas and alcohol.

This practice was not frowned upon by the residents of Aylesbury; indeed, it was welcomed and expected, so much so that there was a year when Parliament revoked the election of one individual due to a particularly corrupt poll. However the practice apparently brought a song to some voters lips:

*Oh these were the good old 'lection days
The good old days of yore
When every vote brought a ten pound note
And a barrel of beer to your door
When golden guineas rained hard and fast
And Boro's were bought with beer
When the bowl went round 'til we rolled on the ground
Cause our heads were giddy and queer*

Much electioneering took place in the vicinity of the alehouses. Most of Aylesbury's old inns were situated around the Market Square and Kingsbury. At one time there were 12 inns and public houses in the Market Square and 6 in Kingsbury. Now there are 3 and 2 respectively.

Of those inns thought to date back to the 15th Century, only the 'Bell' and the 'Kings Head' survive, the casualties being the 'Bulls Head' (demolished 1970), 'Crown' (demolished 1937), and 'George' (demolished 1935). Only the 'Kings Head' remains relatively unchanged.

Of the others, most of which were 18th Century or earlier buildings, including the 'Angel' (demolished 1920), 'Cross Keys' (demolished 1962), 'Eagle' (demolished 1975), 'Royal Oak' (demolished between 1872-1913), the 'White Hart' (demolished 1864) and the 'White Horse' (demolished 1918); nothing is left but photographs.

Some of the pubs, however, are remembered through contemporary songs and text:

*The White Hart said to the Ram one day
Whilst having a chat with the Bear
"Who pulled the Bell at the Foresters Arms
and made the Green Man swear?".
"I think it was the Red Lion" he said.
As he gazed at the Rising Sun
The Saracens and the Eagle knew
The Black Horse was the guilty one
The Horses and Jockeys came trotting by
With the Ploughs and Harrows behind
The Windmill waved a Dark Lantern round
The New Inn and the Grapes to find
The Falcon and the Greyhound
Clung onto the Bricklayers Arms
The Nags Head wagged when Gullivers eyes
Admired Brittanias charms
Two Brewers and George went for a walk
But they did not get very far
They called in at the Chandos
And then dropped off at the Star*

*To watch Three Pigeons on the road
Strutting about that morn
Mixing with the Hen and Chickens
Picking up the Barleycorn
The Kings Head ached from wearing his crown
The Queen's was heavy as well
The Prince of Wales lunched at the Rockwood
And dined at the Bull Hotel
The County and the Borough
thought they would like a trip
They did not want the Railway
so they engaged the Ship
Coach and Horses from the Derby Arms took
them to Victoria docks
With Compasses and Cross Keys to open any locks
They also hired Millwrights and a few Oddfellows too
For they thought it very likely there would
be repairs to do
The Plume of Feathers swayed gently
With the Buckingham Arms wound round
And the White Swan flew to join the crew
Of the Hop Pole, - New Zealand bound!*

This song is still performed today, notably by Rod Puddefoot, a local folksinger.

Many of the now demolished pubs were situated around the boundary of 19th Century Aylesbury or on the main highways. Some were pulled down due to road "improvement" schemes. Several pubs were remodelled many times during their lifespan. The 'Crown' was almost completely rebuilt at the end of the 18th Century, with only a small part of the earlier 16th Century construction remaining. The 'George' was re-fronted in 1827 and then demolished in 1933. The 'Old Plough and Harrow' was reconstructed in 1931. The original 'Hen and Chickens' was demolished in the 1960's and rebuilt close by. The 'White Hart' was rebuilt in 1814 only to be demolished in 1864.

One unfortunate Aylesbury girl was a casualty of the trade. On 22nd July 1858 The Times reported that a barmaid at the Bell Inn had died when a lemonade bottle fell on her and the broken glass entered her neck.

...and in the Market Square

As one would expect, the oldest and largest inns were grouped around the market square. Until the 1930's, the square teemed with activity, at one time boasting 16 inns and ale houses. From the 13th Century onward, regular markets were held there, selling everything including ale, ribbons, livestock, chickens, ducks, wool, cereals, pots and pans. It was the central focus for a large part of the Vale. Most of the town's 15th and 16th Century inns faced the square. They would have been hives of activity in those early days, as the ostlers welcomed travellers on horseback and later, from the 17th Century on, in goods-laden coaches.

The square itself was planned to be somewhat larger than it currently is. The buildings in front of the 'Kings Head' and the 'Dark Lantern' are encroachments.

The Square was a place for entertainment, (most of which would be frowned on by today's standards) and for public affirmation of wrongdoing. This could vary from flogging, a period in the stocks or public execution by hanging. Indeed, there was a balcony at the 'Green Man' (now the 'Market Inn') from which the best views of hangings could be obtained, and the 'Kings Head' upstairs front parlour was in great demand when some poor wretch was being sent to meet his (or her) maker.

An interesting example of the varied fortunes of Aylesbury pubs is the 'White Hart', Market Square, circa 1670-1864. The land where the "Arches" now stand was originally occupied by the 'White Hart'. The 'White Hart' was Richard II's heraldic symbol. It was also at one time a generic term for an inn. The earliest 'White Hart' in Aylesbury, which may well have been built in the 15th Century, was pulled down in 1813 and rebuilt. Parts of Eythorpe House were used in its reconstruction. The original building featured a gateway and enclosed pleasure garden with a bowling green.

The owner of the 'White Hart' was J K Fowler. His grandfather was also a publican and a man of great repute in Amersham. John Fowler took a great interest in his surroundings and was the author of three books relating to events and characters of Aylesbury and district.

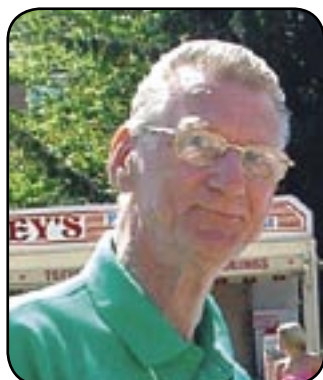
The inn was demolished in 1864 to make way for the Corn Exchange. Fowler leased a farm in Weston Turville in 1863 and advertised an extensive range of eggs and poultry for sale. After the 'White Hart' had been demolished he opened the 'New White Hart' in Exchange Street which was run by a Henry Turnham.

In 1797 the 'White Hart' was considered to be one of the two principal inns of Aylesbury and during the first half of the 19th Century, one of the best hostelries outside of London. A further building at the rear was attributed to the Earl of Rochester in the reign of Charles II. At one time the inn featured an old timber gallery surrounding the courtyard. Some decorations were reported to have come from Salden House. The grounds, of some 5 acres, ran down to the Bearbrook, and included the area now taken up by the Civic Centre; the old Cattle Market, a strip of Exchange Street and the timber yard.

In 1864 the 'White Hart' was bought by the Aylesbury Market Company and demolished to make way for the Corn Exchange and Market. This ill-fated venture did not last: the building was acquired by the Urban District Council in 1901 and became the Town Hall and Offices for a while.

Keith Turner

St. George's Day Parade



Cllr. Ray Ghent

The sun shone brightly on Saturday 22 April 2006 when St. George and the Dragon came to Aylesbury. The town was full of people taking advantage of the glorious weather and the free entertainment that was provided for the event by the Aylesbury Town Council.

Celebrating St. George's Day in traditional English style went on throughout the day with Morris dancing, Clog dancing and Old English Folk songs, and the battle between St. George and The Dragon which would not have been complete without a damsel in distress.

The following day was St. George's Day and although slightly cooler it nevertheless saw the annual Scout Parade and Church Service led by the Acting District Commissioner Graham Webster and attended by the Town Mayor, Cllr. Denise Summers.

This weekend has become an important event for the town and after three successful years has now become a permanent part of the town's calendar.

Cllr. Ray Ghent
Events Spokesman



St. George prepares to slay the dragon.
Photo courtesy of M. Fowler.



Whitethorne Ladies Morris Dancing Team.
Photo courtesy of M. Fowler.



Former Mayor Cllr. Denise Summers with
the Town Crier.



Haddenham Hoofers. Photo courtesy of M. Fowler.

50th Anniversary 1956 – 2006 R.A.F. Halton given the Freedom of Aylesbury

After many months of planning and organising the Events Working Group, working jointly with R.A.F. Halton, were rewarded with an extremely successful day.

The weather held fine and neither the Church Parade nor the Freedom Parade suffered the indignity of being rained upon.

The Church Parade from the Town Council Office to St. Mary's and the following Service conducted by Rev. Ian Ogilvie went according to plan and was enjoyed by all those taking part.

Following the Service, our visiting dignitaries including the Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, the newly appointed High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, Sir Alexander Boswell and Group Captain John Harrison, Station Commander R.A.F. Halton, together with Town Councillors and guests made their way to Market Square where they were delighted to see a wonderful turnout from the residents of the Vale of Aylesbury. The Square was full of people waiting expectantly for the main Freedom Parade to come past.

At the appointed time the Central Band of the Royal Air Force began playing and the Parade marched off. The crowds cheered at every single individual taking part, including the three R.A.F. Police dogs. The highlight of the Parade for many was the fly past by first an Avro Hawk followed a few minutes later by a Spitfire.

Those taking part in the Parade then made their way to the Aylesbury High School for the Presentations. The Aylesbury Town Mayor, Cllr. Denise Summers, on behalf of the Town Council presented a scroll to R.A.F. Halton commemorating and re-affirming the Freedom of the Town on R.A.F. Halton.

Every participant was also presented with a Commemorative Souvenir Booklet.

It was a privilege to see many members of the original Freedom Parade from 1956 who had travelled from all over the country as well as from Canada and Australia to take part and who all thoroughly enjoyed the whole day's event.

Cllr. Ray Ghent, Spokesman
Events Working Group



R.A.F. Freedom March. Photo courtesy of M. Fowler.

New Mayor

Cllr. Niknam Hussain is the new Mayor of Aylesbury for the Civic Year 2006 – 2007. He wants to work with everybody, and he wants everybody to work to make Aylesbury a town we are all proud of.

Niknam was born in Pakistan but came to Aylesbury when he was just a year old. He became involved in community work at an early age through the Aylesbury Vale Racial Equality Council. After University in London he took an MBA and was head-hunted by the City, where he worked for a number of years before becoming an independent Business Consultant. Eventually he returned to settle in Aylesbury, and establish Engage Technologies Ltd, a highly successful electronic communications consultancy working with companies in Aylesbury and also in Hong Kong and New York.

However though building an international business Niknam's sense of community returned as he spent more time in Aylesbury and he was soon working for the community he had grown up in and cared so passionately about.

In 1999 Niknam stood for the Town Council, and was elected at his first attempt as an independent. After working with the Liberal Democrats for a while he came to feel that their core values resonated sympathetically with his moral, ethical and political beliefs and so he became a member of the Party.

Niknam wants to mark his year in office by improving the quality of life for Aylesbury people. This, however, will require everyone to do their part to make Aylesbury the community that they want. Niknam believes that "...if you are not engaged and involved it is impossible to make a difference. You cannot just sit and moan. You have to get involved and act. Communities require everyone to act. If you don't engage you won't change a thing. If the Council gets it wrong, or preferably right, tell us and we can learn to make Aylesbury a better place for all".



Cllr. Niknam Hussain, Mayor of Aylesbury.
Photo courtesy of M. Fowler.

Today Niknam Hussain is very involved at all levels of local government. He is a Town, District and County Councillor, working to make a difference to Aylesbury. As Mayor Niknam is an ambassador for Aylesbury. He strives to promote the goals of the Council as it works for the community. Amongst his projects will be a campaign on behalf of Aylesbury Market, and he will work particularly to promote the welfare of children and young people, and of the elderly of Aylesbury.

His Charities are CHAT and Age Concern. We wish this charismatic, generous hearted and hard working young man the best of success in his year of office.

Introducing Cllr. Jenny Puddefoot, the new Deputy Mayor of Aylesbury

Cllr. Puddefoot was born in Aylesbury and attended Aylesbury High School for Girls. She trained as a Teacher, and has worked in local schools teaching young people with learning difficulties. She now works part-time.

She is married and has two grown up children. Whilst she was raising her family she often looked for opportunities to enhance resources available to young children. In the absence of any Local Authority provision she worked with other parents to organise a mother and toddler group, holiday play schemes and fund raising activities. When she decided to attend an adult computer course, she found herself in a room without any IT equipment, next door to a locked room full of computers. She wrote to the relevant authority and once they were made aware of the fact that she and her fellow students did not own personal computers, the room was unlocked and the resources made available. These experiences and the belief that communication between people and service providers could be improved led to her taking a more active role in the local community.

Jenny is a past District Councillor. In 2001 she was elected to represent the Elmhurst Ward for the then newly-formed Town Council. For as long as Jenny can remember Aylesbury has changed and grown and whilst she welcomes progress and adaptation to the modern world, feels that changes have to be carefully considered and consulted upon. She feels that Aylesbury needs to continue to thrive and prosper but the new housing, businesses and leisure facilities need to benefit all. She has always loved Aylesbury and wants to protect the essential character of the town and the special identities of the parish communities. People need to feel that they are in Aylesbury and not any other town in the Southeast.

SMILE FOR YOU

*Smiling is infectious; you catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me today, I started smiling too.
I passed around the corner and someone saw my grin
When he smiled I realised I'd passed it on to him.
I thought about that smile then I realised its worth,
A single smile, just like mine could travel around the earth.
So, if you feel a smile begin, don't leave it undetected
Let's start an epidemic quick, and get the world infected!*

In addition to her Town Council work on the Planning Committee and with the Events Group, Jenny supports the Uptown Coffee Bar, which is run by 'Youth Concern (Aylesbury)' and the Jigsaw Theatre Company. The Uptown Coffee Bar provides a safe place for young people to meet and access to careers advice and help with personal problems. The Jigsaw Theatre Company offers adults who have disabilities the creative outlets of theatre, music and dance. Jenny often encounters former pupils here, and is pleased to know that the activities she encouraged them to discover in their schooldays have continued to give pleasure to them in later life.

A recent addition to Jenny's family has been her granddaughter, now aged four. In her role as a grandmother she is aware the problems and pressures faced by parents balancing the need to work with raising a family, and will do whatever she can in her capacity of Councillor to make life easier for them.

As Deputy Mayor, Jenny will support Cllr. Hussain in promoting Aylesbury. She believes that it is important for the Town Council to take an overview of whatever is happening in Aylesbury, to link organisations, to help to avoid duplication and to facilitate partnerships and joint efforts. She feels that when decisions are being made, all views should be seriously considered, and if some are discarded, clear and logical reasons should be given as to why. She also wants, when issues have been highlighted, to ensure they remain in the public domain and are not forgotten. Finally, it is her intention to see that individuals and charities who work tirelessly for the good of the community are given as much support as possible in their efforts and, where possible, the recognition they deserve.



Cllr. Jenny Puddefoot,
The Deputy Mayor of Aylesbury.
Photo courtesy of K. Poole.

Being the Mayor - Cllr. Denise Summers

The ancient office of Mayor goes back to the days when Mayors had much wider authority and power than they do today. The position today is almost exclusively ceremonial with the exception of the chairing of council meetings. However, the importance of the position is still widely recognised and remains the highest office that the citizens of a town, through their elected representatives on the Town Council, can confer.

As you may realise, the vast majority of organisations that call upon the services of the Mayor do so to enhance their profile. It has very little to do with the individual wearing the chain of office whoever he or she might be. That said however, the Mayor can expect to attend in excess of 300 invitations during a year, giving them the opportunity to meet a great number of people from all manner of organisations.

People such as the staff and pupils of our schools, sharing in their scholastic achievements, their concerts and performances; hard working members of a wide variety of charities to publicise and endorse their fundraising and volunteer work; and the business entrepreneurs and managers in our town to share with their success and business acumen. There are also those whose success is not measured by money or academic achievements but nonetheless a visit to the Guides and Brownies, to the Cubs and Scouts, to the residential homes and care institutions, is no less rewarding than attending the High Sheriff's Civic Service, the Lord Lieutenant's awards evening, other towns Mayoralty Civic functions and services or parades with R.A.F. Halton.

There is however a more serious side to the Mayoralty, because the Town Mayor is also the Chairman of the Town Council, with all that Chairmanship of any committee entails. In addition as Chairman of the Town Council the Mayor is expected to attend other organisations meetings, AGM's, formal dinners and events at which town and parish councils are an integral part. So in the main, the Mayor serves the community by being ever present and ever available to them. As you can imagine, it is not unusual on weekends to attend a number of events; I personally once had 9 events spread over Saturday and Sunday.

In addition, part of the Mayor's function during their term of office is also to raise funds on behalf of their chosen charities, which involves the Mayor attending at events and functions undertaken their chosen charities as well as holding Mayoral charity fundraising events.

As Town Mayor of Aylesbury, the major objective is not only to promote Aylesbury Town and its residents, but also to support the numerous, diverse activities in and around the town and to champion Aylesbury as one of the most sought after places to live, work in and visit. You too are important in the support and shaping of Aylesbury Town and its future and I hope that many of you will be present at the various Aylesbury Town and partnership events planned throughout the coming year - events to build upon the civic pride of Aylesbury and to embrace our families and children.

Mayor's Charity Ball

The following companies donated Raffle Prizes for the Mayor's Charity Ball:

The Leigh's Jewellers, Cloisters Market, Friars Square.
Donna, Manager, First Impressions Hair Design, Bourbon St.
Blue Bar - Large Coffee, Free Cake.
Nails, Kingsbury - £10 gift voucher.
Oggy Oggys, Pasty Shop, Bourbon Street - Pasty to the value of £10.

The Fragrance Shop, Friars Square.
Baldys Barbers Shop, Kingsbury.
The Body Shop, High Street, Aylesbury.
Butchers, Cambridge Street.
Waterstones, Friars Square, Aylesbury.
Boots, The Chemist.

At the end of her final Year of Office, Cllr. Denise Summers was pleased to present cheques for £1965 each to Florence Nightingale Hospice and Queens Park.

ANNUAL REPORT OF AYLESBURY TOWN COUNCIL 01 APRIL 2005 TO 31 MARCH 2006

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, Councillor Mike Smith); Personnel and Appointments Committee (Chairperson, Councillor Mrs Penni Thorne); Planning Committee (Chairperson, Councillor Steve Mitchell); Licensing Committee (Acting Chairperson Councillor Steve Mitchell). The Town Council reviews the Committee structures and their membership annually.

WORKING GROUPS

The Town Council had the following Working Groups:

Allotments (Speaker Councillor Mrs Freda Roberts MBE JP); Events (Speaker Councillor Ray Ghent); Parks and Open Spaces (Speaker Cllr. Mrs J Poole); Speakers (Speaker Councillor Steve Patrick); Transfer of Assets Group (Speaker Councillor Julian Newman). Each Working Group reports to full Council. The Town Council reviews the membership of Working Groups annually. The Council and Committees and Working Groups held, between them, approximately 150 meetings in the course of the year.

ADMINISTRATION

The Town Council's office is located in Church Street, Aylesbury and a staff of six has been employed.

TOWN COUNCIL FINANCES

The Town Council receives the majority of its funding from the Council Tax, with the remainder coming from allotment rents. A Precept of £335,850 was raised for the financial year 2004/2005, which equated to a Band D payment of £19.68p per year or 38p 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 by Hacker Young, Chartered Accountants (appointed by the Audit Commission).

Special Expenses: Town ratepayers pay a separate sum to the Aylesbury Vale District Council for services delivered by that authority. These are: Aylesbury Cemetery, Community Centres, Sports Facilities, Parks and Open Spaces.

COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR

ALLOTMENTS

The Allotments Group continued its good work, taking occupancy on most sites to within a few plots of 100% occupancy.

School Visit:

On the 12th October a visit by Ashmead School took place at the Old Stoke Road. 150 children and staff split into 5 groups. Mr Ian Mortimer took charge of the visiting groups and showed them around his plots and made sure that each group left the site with a selection of vegetable and flowers. Youngsters were introduced to the principles of food production and sustainability. It is hoped to expand the programme to involve other infant and junior schools in Aylesbury.

EVENTS

The Events Group works to promote events which bring people into the Town Centre, to support the local economy, and to make life more enjoyable for residents of and visitors to Aylesbury. This year it has broadened its portfolio.

Councillor Ghent provided a report on the Group's activities from which the following is taken:

"2005 once again saw an increase in activities provided by the Town Council through the Events Group for the community. For the second time St. George's Day was celebrated. On the Saturday visitors to Aylesbury Town were entertained with a re-enactment of the slaying of the dragon in the form of a Mummers Play. There were performances of Morris dancing and English Folk music. Visitors were also entertained by Whitethorne, a clog dancing group.

On Sunday the traditional Scout Parade marched from the Civic Centre to St Mary's Church where during the service, conducted by Canon Tim Higgins, Scouts past and present were invited to renew their 'Promise'.

For 'Aylesbury On Sea' a 20 tonne consignment of sand was deposited in Vale Park and formed the 'beach' centre piece to a wide variety of attractions. The Events Group produced a postcard depicting Aylesbury with a pier. With some estimated 3500 people attending 'Aylesbury On Sea' proved to be the highlight of the year.

In September the Town Council was represented at the County Show. This was an opportunity to publicise the work of the Town Council and to discuss a variety of topics with visitors.

For the fifth successive year the Town Council hosted the 'Proms In The Park' event.

Charter Day this year, a joint operation with the Town Centre Management, again enjoyed the atmosphere of a Tudor Fair. This comprised many authentic looking characters from the period including a 'Rat Catcher' and some 'Plague' victims. During the day some 2000 visitors were entertained. This event was very well received by the community and will be included in next years programme".

GRANTS COMMITTEE

Grants to Community Groups:

01/05	Quarrendon Quackers Toddler Group	£400.00
02/05	St John Men's Club	£500.00
03/05	Thursday Morning Club	£292.50
05/05	Thames Valley Partnership	£1,000.00
06/05	Aylesbury Credit Union	£1,000.00
07/05	Meadowcroft Pre-School	£1,000.00
08/05	Aylesbury District Guide Association	£1,000.00
09/05	Vitalise	£376.00
10/05	Little Learners 123	£1,000.00
11/05	Hartwell Residents' Association	£250.00
12/05	Buckinghamshire County Museum (referred to former P & R for further funding)	£500.00
13/05	Buckinghamshire County Museum (referred to former P & R for extra funding)	£500.00
14/05	Bucks Bouncers Trampoline Club	£1,000.00
15/05	Indian Cultural Society	£1,000.00
16/05	Age Concern	£425.00
17/05	Haywards Way Seniors Club	£350.00
18/05	Aylesbury Parkinson's Branch	£420.00
19/05	Bucks Radio	£1,000.00
20/05	Aylesbury & District CAB	£1,000.00
21/05	Thames Valley Crimestoppers	£1,000.00
22/05	Bucks Play Association	£613.88
23/05	Aylesbury Area Disabled Club	£1,000.00
24/05	Rotary Club of Aylesbury Hundreds	£785.00
25/05	Queens Park Centre	£1,000.00
28/05	Aylesbury Police Station	£1,000.00

LICENSING

Councillor Mitchell was Acting Chair of the Licensing Committee and gave a report from which the following is taken:

"In response to the new legislation governing licensing, the Licensing Committee has had a very busy year. A number of applications were opposed. Objections were being based on the four licensing objectives: public safety; prevention of public nuisance; prevention of crime and disorder; and protection of children from harm.

The reasons for the Committee's objections included concerns about potential increases in: public nuisance, ie noise and vibration coming from premises; anti-social behaviour of some customers in the streets - urinating, vomiting and shouting; crime and disorder: drunkenness, disorder and fighting, often continuing into the early hours; protection of children: smoking in parts of the premises where children are permitted; events specially organised for the youth market on premises whose prime purpose is the sale of alcohol.

The Committee had limited success in constraining trading hours. In December 2005 Members revised their policy and have since only objected to extensions of hours where there was substantial local opposition or where the imposition of conditions was considered reasonable. The committee participates in the quarterly meetings of the Licensing Forum which is attended by Public House Trade Representatives, the Police, AVDC Environmental Health Officers and other interested parties.

Anti-social behaviour late into the night appears not to have increased since the introduction of extended hours, but Friday and Saturday nights following 23 November 2005 were consistently colder and wetter than usual. The summer months should show if the Act has had the effect the Government expects".

Councillor Mitchell concluded his remarks by observing:

"The Committee will continue to press AVDC's Licensing Committee to co-ordinate its Licensing Policy with the Community Plan, the Vision for the Vale and AVDC's own planning policies".

PARKS & OPEN SPACES

The Parks and Open Spaces Group set out a schedule for meetings and site visits to cover all parks in Aylesbury. The purpose of these events is to conduct an informal audit of the state of all the parks in Aylesbury; to develop liaisons with local residents; to work with residents and AVDC to ensure that the parks are developed to their full capacity and in accordance with the wishes of those who use them and to consider providing seed capital to attract lottery investment for improvement programmes.

PERSONNEL & APPOINTMENTS

To the great sadness of the Council and Staff their Allotments Officer, Mr Roger Green passed away. Mr Green had given superb service and will be sadly missed.

PLANNING

The Planning Committee has met 23 times and considered 660 applications. Members have responded to all general consultations from AVDC, AVA and BCC on topics which would have an effect on Aylesbury.

On major planning applications the Committee have submitted detailed, mainly critical, comments and have often been represented at AVDC Development Control. Members consider that our credibility with that Committee and influence on decisions has increased during the year, although with two proposals for large residential developments – Schwarzkopf and Walton Street, which had obtained earlier outline permission – the Committee was unable to influence the outcome when the detailed design was considered.

Town Council comments, along with those of other interested parties, on the original proposals for the Nestle site resulted in a change of approach by the applicants with greater public consultation, resulting in much improved proposals and what promises to be an attractive development. Our comments on the Dayla site proposals were supported by AVDC and now an appeal by the applicant against the refusal has been rejected. Comments on the Big Hand Mo's proposals for a drive-thru take-away and another for 24 flats also assisted rejection of these applications. Comments on the Litton House site, and many other smaller schemes have led to improvements in proposals.

The Committee were pleased to see AVDC set out the relevant planning policies in a Southcourt guidance document for developers, which Members had been requesting for some time, and have suggested a similar advisory document for Kingsbury extending beyond shop-front policies. Councillors welcomed the introduction of AVDC's Concept Statements offering guidance to developers on important sites.

The Committee have been particularly watchful of developments for infill and back garden land. Poorly designed conversions of single houses into flats and/or bed-sitters have been resisted, and where planning legislation cannot control quality issues Members have often referred proposals, exhibiting shortcomings regarding health and safety, building regulations and environmental health to other AVDC Officers. Where applications involved extensive car parking areas in front gardens, the Committee have suggested rearrangement to provide hedges and tree planting to the street front and neighbouring boundaries.

The Committee have objected to the further proliferation of take-aways in or near the town centre, particularly where the loss of shop premises was involved.

The Committee look forward to the applications for the new theatre and shopping development, as well as the draft master plan for the Town Centre which is being prepared by Aylesbury Vale Advantage.

SPEAKERS

The Speakers Group, under the Chairmanship of Councillor Steve Patrick, acts as an interactive scrutiny body for all other groups and committees. It deliberates policy initiatives to be developed for full Council and acts as a crucible for the exchange of ideas and information on ongoing and proposed projects and potential future developments.

TRANSFER OF ASSETS

Aylesbury Town Council aspires to take over the running of a number of local assets in the belief that when services are delivered by local people, quality can be closely controlled and accountability increased. The Transfer of Assets group met on a number of occasions throughout the year to debate and construct the Council's strategy, and develop a selective plan whereby specific assets were identified and prioritised.

Councillor Julian Newman reported:

"The first asset identified was Aylesbury cemetery. A meeting took place at which a group of three ATC Councillors and three AVDC Cabinet Members were formed, to discuss aspirations and concerns.

Negotiations have progressed over the transfer of Aylesbury cemetery, a project progress plan has been developed and agreement in principle to transfer in April 2007 has been made. There are a number of administrative, legal and logistical issues to be addressed and meetings are scheduled on a regular basis running up to the transfer date.

It is anticipated that the process adopted for this initial transfer will form a blueprint, which can be used for future transfers and the timescales involved will be reduced accordingly.

During the coming year greater emphasis will be placed on starting the transfer process for other assets, the priority of which will be determined at the first meeting in the new civic cycle".

OTHER COUNCIL BUSINESS

Litter and Dog Hygiene Bins:

The Town Council has maintained its funding programme for the installation, repair and servicing of dog hygiene bins through the town. Members recognised the continuing need for this facility and The Town Council currently provides more than 200 litter bins and 200+ dog hygiene bins.

During the year an inventory was taken of litter bins, their location was mapped and an inspection routine decided upon, to ensure the satisfaction and safety of the public

Notice Boards:

The Town Council has 10 notice boards, one in each Ward at the following locations:

Haydon Hill Community Centre; Quarrendon & Meadowcroft Community Centre; Alfred Rose Community Centre; Parton Road Shops (right hand side, approached from Tring Road); Bedgrove Community Centre; Harvey Road shops; Southcourt Community Centre; Walton Court Community Centre; Prebendal Road Community Centre; Midland House, Buckingham Street

The notice boards have two separate, lockable, sides: local organisations are able to publicise their events, etc on the one side and the Town Council utilises the other for Notices, etc.

FUTURE PLANS

Every opportunity will be taken by the Town Council to seek representation on, and consultative rights with, other bodies and potential partners to better enable Members to achieve and sustain their objectives. The Town Council will continue to negotiate for the transfer of Aylesbury's assets from the District Council.

Members intend to apply for Quality Status at the earliest opportunity. When Quality Status has been achieved the Council will negotiate with the Principle Councils for the devolution of a number of local services to the Town Council. Members believe that local services are best, most efficiently, sensitively and cost effectively delivered by local people.

The manner in which the Town Council communicates with the public has been improved during the past year and this will be further developed, including the continuation of a quarterly Newsletter and the progressive extension of its official website. A public consultation will be undertaken concerning the wishes of Aylesburians with regard to the future development of their Town. The Council will act to ensure that the Townspeople's wishes are respected in the creation of the Local Development Framework and the Strategic Plans which govern the continuing development of Aylesbury.

Members will seek to promote the Town at every opportunity. They will encourage the local economy by holding public events and festivities in the Town Centre and to this end will contribute financially to the street entertainment provided by Aylesbury Vale District Council. They will underpin the success of all events by publicising the work of the Town Centre Management Partnership, through their quarterly magazine and their website, and through attracting visitors to the Town by the creation of an official Town Guide.

The Council will adopt an Environmental Policy to resonate with the aspirations of the Principal Councils in making Aylesbury a greener and healthier place to live. Aylesbury will be entered in the "Thames and Chilterns in Bloom" regional heat of the Royal Horticultural Society's "Britain in Bloom" annual competition. This will help to develop civic pride and enhance Aylesbury's attractiveness to visitors and potential investors, and increase the enjoyment for residents of their town.

The Council will celebrate the diversity of Aylesbury's townspeople and will continue to work towards harmonious integration and equal opportunities for all. The Council will continue to encourage and buttress the efforts of voluntary and community groups in their contribution to the quality of life for Aylesbury's diverse population.

Finally the Council will continue its efforts to enhance the contentment and quality of life in all its aspects for all residents through helping the work of the Principal Councils in their efforts to drive regeneration and sustainable development in Aylesbury.

Aylesbury Town Centre Events 2006 September - December

SEPTEMBER

Parklife - Vale Park

Friday 1 - Sunday 3 September

This ever-popular annual event showcases the talents of local people, groups, clubs and organisations. This three day event provides a programme of entertainment for all the family including a play day for 5-13 year olds, theatre performances, cultural diversity events, sports, music, arts and crafts. For a full programme of events and activities over the three days look out for the special leaflets at various outlets around the town nearer the time.

Charter Day Tudor Fayre

Sunday 10 September 11.00am - 4.00pm, Market Square

This event is just getting bigger and better so don't miss it. As part of the heritage weekend free family entertainment will be provided in the Market Square. Come along and learn about the past as Aylesbury turns back the clock to 1554. Enjoy the Tudor entertainment including the Ratcatcher, Singing Plague Victims, Travelling Players, Jesters and Tudor crafts people at work.

Oyster Fair

Sunday 24 September, Kingsbury

Oyster Fair is coming to Aylesbury. A chance to enjoy a glass of champagne and sample a range of fresh marinated seafoods. Learn more about the produce from the 'oyster experts' and then treat yourself and take home some of the delicious food on offer - lovely! (the event includes a Craft Fair).

Farmers Market

Tuesday 26 September 9.00am - 2.00pm, Market Square

OCTOBER

Special Half Term Farmers' Market and activities -

Tuesday 24 October 9.00am - 2.00pm, Market Square

Keep everyone happy this half term. A chance for the grown ups to buy a range of fresh local produce and enjoy some music, whilst the kids take part in fun craft activities and see the farm animals.

Ghouls and Villains

Thursday 26 October

Meet at the Civic Centre, 6.00pm

For all the family. An intriguing and light-hearted one hour walk around "spooky" Aylesbury. Tickets available from the Tourist Information Centre in advance - 01296 330559. This event is very popular so book early to avoid disappointment. (If there is excessive demand additional dates may be added).

NOVEMBER

Christmas Lights Switch On

Thursday 16 November 5.30pm - 7.30pm, Market Square

Kick off the festive season in sparkling fashion. This popular event is hosted on behalf of the town by Mix 96 who will provide free family entertainment throughout the evening including their usual fun with quizzes, activities and of course fabulous music. The lights will actually be switched on at 6.50pm followed by a firework display. There is also a funfair and stalls for you to enjoy and of course the opportunity to do some late night shopping as the shops stay open until 8.00pm.

Santa's Parade

Sunday 19 November 10.30am High Street, Market Square and Bourbon Street

A must for the kids! Santa will arrive in Aylesbury for a spectacular parade through town. Santa will be joined by all his friends including entertainers and cast of the Civic Centre Pantomime. Come along and wave him on his way from the High Street, around the Market Square, into Bourbon Street and on to his Grotto. After the parade the children can enjoy the small funfair and entertainment around the town.

Charity Market -

Sunday 26 November 11.00am - 3.00pm, Market Square

Farmers' Market

Tuesday 28 November 9.00am - 2.00pm, Market Square

DECEMBER

Christmas Gift and Craft Fayre

Sunday 3 December 11.00am - 3.00pm, Market Square

Italian Market

Friday 8 - Saturday 9 December, 9.00am - 4.00pm Kingsbury

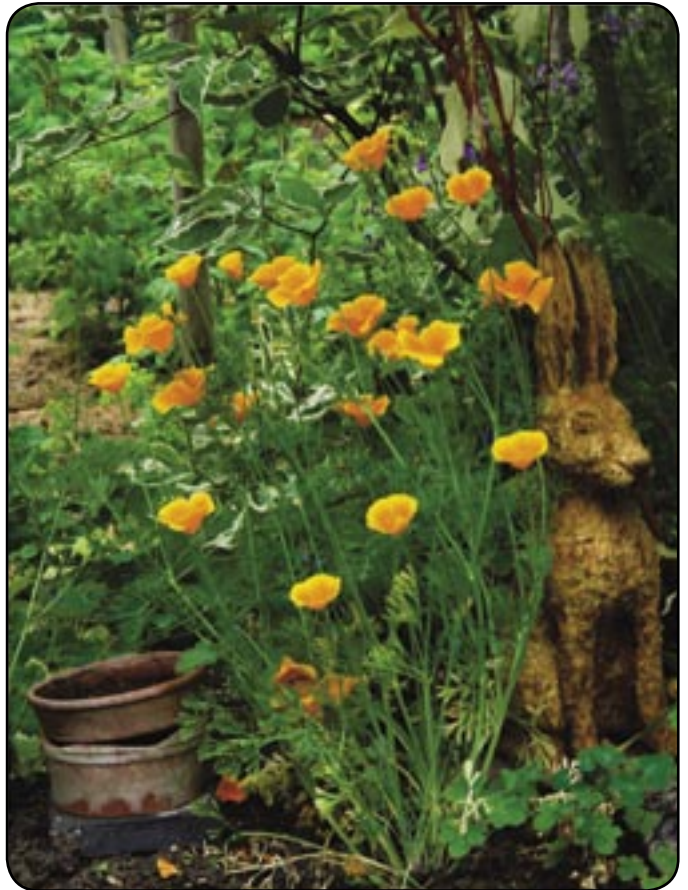
Christmas Farmers' Market

Sunday 10 December 10.00am - 2.00pm, Market Square

Fresh local produce including meats and cheeses, fruits and vegetables. Seasonal produce with festive music and children's activities. A delicious array of local produce from a variety of local farmers.

Skating in Kingsbury 16 and 17 December 2006

A Skating Rink will be set up in Kingsbury to provide hours of fun for all the family, together with a Speciality Christmas Market selling interesting and unusual seasonal artefacts and gifts, and stalls with roasted chestnuts, baked potatoes, mulled wine and many other festive delights.



Aylesbury Town Council
5 Church Street, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 2QP
Tel: **01296 425678** Fax: **01296 426134**
Email: info@aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk
www.aylesburytowncouncil.gov.uk

Designed and printed by

bluepepperdesigns
creative design and print

Telephone. **01296 424699** Website. www.bpdesigns.co.uk