



BRIDGING the GAP

Stratford-upon-Avon

ISSUE 4

Quarterly Newsletter from Stratford-upon-Avon TOWN COUNCIL

STILL IN SEARCH OF SUITABLE OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

The inaugural newsletter set out the reasons why Council wished to provide a permanent, purpose built office extension to the Town Hall. The Council's staff were working in cramped, inappropriate temporary offices, not fit for purpose. Following a full financial feasibility study, Council went ahead in applying for planning permission to provide suitable accommodation not just for the short term, but to ensure additional administrative facilities for the Town Hall in perpetuity.

Planning permission was denied by an overwhelming majority. Undeterred, Council appealed and submitted a revised design gaining approval by the same overwhelming ratio that previously refused permission.

Recently, the Town Council received confirmation by the Planning Inspectorate appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, who has upheld the Council's planning appeal.

The Inspector considered that the proposal would 'preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area. It would accord with the development plan policies for the protection of these important interests'.

The Inspector further considered that the extension would be 'seen as an interesting, sensitively designed addition to a subsidiary part of the listed building' and 'make a positive contribution in its own right', stating that 'none of the other



matters raised outweigh the factors that have led to my conclusion that the appeals should be allowed'.

This vindication has come as no real surprise to the Town Council, for it was always of the opinion that far from causing detriment, either design would have actually enhanced the building.

However, this state of affairs has taken over three years and Council recognises that market conditions have changed since the investigations first started. After many hours of deliberation, it has resolved not to proceed with any structural alteration to the Town Hall at this time.

Instead it has chosen to rent offices within Elizabeth House, which it believes offers excellent accommodation for its staff. Although the offices are contained within the District Council, the offices

enjoy separate access from Church Street enabling the Town Council to retain its own identity whilst the close proximity of both the District and Town Councils will be of benefit to the general public.

Town Council has only agreed in principle to this arrangement. Negotiations have just started and the full financial implications have yet to be realised. Consequently, the matter will be returned to the next Town Council meeting on 17 March, 2009.

The Council is anxious for the views of the public. If you would like Council to take account of what you think, please come along to the Annual Meeting at the Town Hall on Thursday 5 March at 7.30 p.m. If you are unable to attend, please write to us with your comments, or if you want to discuss the issue personally, contact the Mayor or your local ward member.





TOWN HALL

A PRACTICAL APPROACH MAY SAVE THE DAY

The lead article in issue 3 of 'Bridging the Gap' on how to prepare and stay safe during flood conditions prompted much feedback from those who have experienced the devastation it causes.

Council is particularly grateful for the advice from local resident Mr Dave Cole, who works in the pollution and flood prevention industry. He noticed, when exhibiting at Flood Fares, that many people were being enticed into spending considerable sums of money on expensive means of flood protection before trying basic DIY methods of control, which usually work just as well and are far, far cheaper.

'If you know where to look you can do a very good DIY flood kit for under £200'.

The first step is to look at your house and decide which type of flooding you are at risk from so that steps can be taken to prevent it. Risk assessment can be daunting but it is really a common sense approach to understanding the situation.

Mr Cole's helpful and straightforward guide should help you through the process.

FLOOD PREVENTION PLANNING

- This guide is a starting point to aid the identification of areas that can reduce flood risk.
- Flood water can also enter a property from ground saturation, therefore most flood control solutions only offer short term flood control.
- By identifying the type of flooding and the areas of entry, you can address flood control by knowing what can be done using low cost DIY methods.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT DURING PREPARATION

1) Air bricks & Vents

- Air brick covers can be made or purchased to be installed prior to a flood and removed after the flood.
- For tumble drier vents etc move above flood level or cover as air bricks.

NB When flood seals are in place isolate equipment.

Never seal vents that are in use.

2) Waste pipes and overflows

- Seal with nylon drain plugs.

3) Brick work general maintenance

- Seal bricks and mortar with water sealant.
- Make sure pointing and cracks are repaired.
- Seal any holes made by cables i.e. aerial/phone lines. Use silicon sealant or expanding foam.

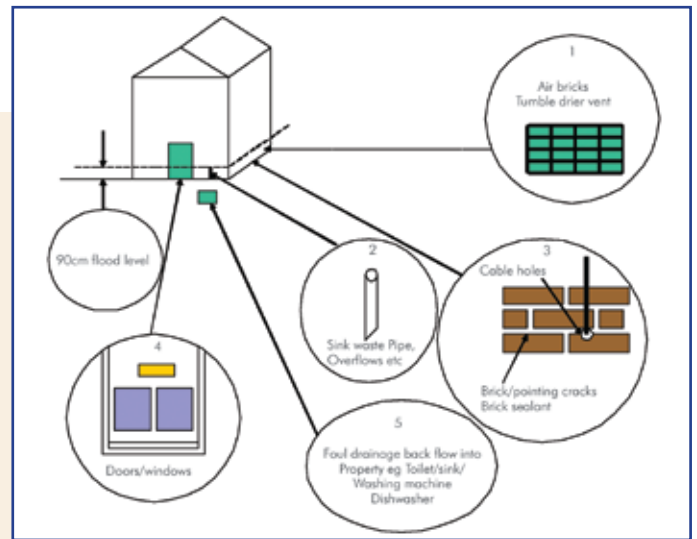
NB Shrubs and flower beds can hide areas of flood entry.

4) Doors and Windows

- Make sure all mortar and seals are good.
- Seal door with board and sealant against door frame.

5) Sewer

Prevent back flow into property via foul drain. Protect flooding via toilet appliance.



USEFUL DIY PRODUCTS YOU WILL NEED

(Prices are approximate)

Silicon sealant/expanding foam (from £4.00 to £10.00)

Water sealant 5 ltr (£13.00)

Nylon Drain plugs (£5.00)

Plywood and fixings for door dams

Drain back flow stoppers (from £20.00)

Water absorbent bags

REMEMBER... SAFETY FIRST

- Storm water contains sewage. Always wear protective clothing when dealing with any kind of flood water.
- When flood prevention is in place, turn off the gas/electric and water supply.
- Do not carry out flood prevention that may cause harm or risk to others.

SUPPORT AND USEFUL INFORMATION

If you need further help or advice, contact info@floodforum.org.uk

ARE YOU STUCK FOR TRANSPORT?

If so, the Community Links social transport scheme maybe just what you are looking for.

Community Links is a partnership project between Warwickshire County Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Stratford-on-Avon Volunteer Centre and Stratford-upon-Avon Town Trust. It operates a small fleet of vehicles, each with full disability access, offering a 'door-to-door' service for people stuck for transport to get to and from their nearest town or village for shopping or visiting friends.

The service is for people who have a genuine

need for local transport and cannot access public transport because of mobility problems and/or who live in a rurally isolated location with no other form of transport available.

The Community Links service operates between about 9.30am and 2.30pm on weekdays in each part of the District three days a week. The fare system is a simple flat rate of £1.30 per single journey, i.e. £2.60 return 'door-to-door'.

If you need this service, or know someone who does, phone Community Links on 01789 264491 for more information



The Community Links social transport scheme works in close co-operation with the Volunteer Centre Medical Journey Scheme for doctor, dentist and hospital and medical related appointments. For this 'medical journey' scheme contact Clarissa Roberts on 01789 296344.



COMMUNITY FORUMS GET UNDERWAY

The Community Forum is an advisory body which acts as a key vehicle for community engagement within the locality. Members of the public may raise issues of concern and wherever possible, together with relevant agencies, solutions to those concerns can be worked out.

If you have a specific concern or problem, contact your Town Council representative, or come along to the local surgery held beforehand from 5.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. where you will be able to speak to your local Safer Neighbourhoods Policing Team and officers from Warwickshire County Council and the District Council.

The next Forum Meeting is at 6.00 p.m. on Tuesday 17 February, 2009 at the High School. If you would like to suggest an issue for future Community Forum meetings, or would like to become involved please contact WCC Stratford Area Office by e-mail: stratfordoffice@warwickshire.gov.uk or telephone 01789 290784.

THE TOWN COUNCIL AND ITS STANDING COMMITTEES - HOW IT OPERATES

The Town council conducts its business via four Standing Committees which report to Council. There are also nine sub-committees/working parties which report to the various Standing Committees. To get to know what each committee does, the newsletters will spotlight on the responsibilities and serving members of each Standing Committee.

Mayoral & Protocol Committee

Stratford-upon-Avon is a town rich in history and the Town Council is mindful of its lineage and proudly protects its civic ceremonial standing. The town Mayor usually has in excess of five hundred engagements during their term of office, and the protocol that must be observed is exacting. The Council hosts or co-hosts many civic receptions, including those during the Shakespeare birthday celebrations and it is to the Mayoral & Protocol Committee that such matters are referred. Previously only past Mayors served on the committee, bringing wisdom from experience, but now this committee is open to other members.

Mayoral & Protocol is also responsible for human affairs, including complaint procedures, the conditions of service of its staff and implementing policies to ensure equal opportunities and Health & Safety.

Members of M&P:

Chairman:	Councillor Maureen Beckett	Tel: 01789 262522
Deputy:	Councillor Joan McFarlane	Tel: 01789 209033
Councillors:	Donna Barker	Sub-Committees reporting to M&P: • Christmas Lights Switch-On Celebrations Committee
	Kate Dill-Russell	
	Roy Lodge MBE	
	Joy Seaman	
	Vince Seaman	
	Joyce Taylor	
	Chris Wall	



GO ON...

As actress Julie Walters so succinctly puts it:

'When are you going to find out that your smoke alarm doesn't work? Now, or when you're trapped in a fire? Go on, 'pull your finger out', TEST YOUR SMOKE ALARM'.

THE TOWN COUNCIL TAKES THE LEAD ON HOUSEHOLD BATTERY RECYCLING...

Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council is committed to recycling wherever possible, and fully supports government dictate that Britain has to increase household battery recycling from the current level of 2.8% to over 25% by 2012 and over 45% by 2016.

BatteryBack, the nationwide battery collection and recycling organisation, providing a treatment and recovery service for all types of batteries, is committed to delivering 80,000 collection points throughout the country in order to process 200 million additional batteries per year within three years.



The Town Council now provides a household BatteryBack collection point outside the Town Hall. The public can deposit their household batteries in the distinctive 'battery' can. Batteries are eventually sent to two sites in Belgium for recycling.

Puttin' on my top hat Tyin' up my white tie Brushin' off my tails...

It's that time of year again and the ever popular Mayor's Ball may not run to top hat and tails anymore, but black tie and posh frocks still abound.



The Mayor's Ball which returns to the Civic Hall will take place on Friday 6 March, 2009. For more information, or to obtain tickets (£40.00), please contact the Civic Secretary, Mrs Lisa Blaxall on 01789 269332 (Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday).

Profits from the event will go to the Mayor's charities, the Shakespeare Hospice and Action Unlimited.





TOWN HALL

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COUNCIL

There are eighteen members on the Town Council and to enable you to get to know them better, we profile one of them in each newsletter.

War baby, Shelagh Sandle was born in Fillongley but her very first school was St Gregory's in Henley Street, here in Stratford-upon-Avon. She lived with her family at the 'Red Horse', in Bridge Street where her father was the manager.



Councillor, Shelagh Sandle

Shelagh spent the last ten years of her teaching career at Marie Corelli School. In 1997 she changed direction, becoming the well known local postmistress in Shottery. After just one year of opening, the Post Office was awarded the accolade of being the Best Small Office in the Community of Coventry and Warwickshire.

professional women who work to improve the lives of women and children throughout the world.

Being a Governor of the High School and teaching privately has enabled Shelagh to stay in touch with children – her great love. Conversely, Shelagh also responds very well to old people and serving on the Municipal Charities and the Hylands Residential Care Home enables her to keep an eye on the welfare of the elderly, the two most vulnerable sectors of the community.

His work, and later her own, as a teacher, saw Shelagh living in places as diverse as Leamington Spa, Newcastle on Tyne, Northern Ireland, North Berwick, Fareham and Watford. Throughout the intervening years, her father owned Hylands Hotel, now Hylands Residential Care Home, still a family business, so Shelagh and her young family visited Stratford-upon-Avon on many occasions before settling here permanently in 1986.

Shelagh is heartbroken at the demise of the Post Office services. Along with many others, her shop and Post Office closed in 2003, although she still lives on the premises.

Shelagh's children, two sons and a daughter, were all educated in Stratford-upon-Avon but now live as far apart as Bristol, London and Edinburgh. Shelagh takes every opportunity to support the arts and her children have inherited her love of the theatre and cinema.

Councillor Shelagh Sandle joined the Town Council in 2006 as a ward member for Guild & Hathaway. She serves on the Planning Consultative Committee and General Purposes Committee. She is also Chairman of the Town Hall Management Sub-Committee, the Cemetery Working Party and is a member of the Newsletter Editorial, Heritage Open Days and Christmas Festival Sub-Committees. Although honoured to be elected Deputy Mayor in 2009, a successful election needs to be won in 2010 before she can realise that honour.

Her faith and her church are one of the most important things in Shelagh's life and she is a regular attendee at St Gregory's and the Catholic Church in Shottery, and is active in all aspects of parish life. Soroptimists International is also important to her, and she takes every opportunity to promote the organisation of business and

Shelagh is a passionate re-cycler. She firmly believes that it is possible to make Stratford-upon-Avon a town free of plastic bags, in line with other forward thinking towns.

COUNCIL CONTACTS

Alveston

- Cllr Michael Crutchley 01789 267564
- Cllr Dr Rev Roy Lodge MBE 01789 204850
- Cllr Joan McFarlane 01789 209033
- Cllr Joy Seaman 01789 204633
- Cllr Vince Seaman 01789 204633

Avenue & Newtown

- Cllr Donna Barker 01789 267216
- Cllr Maureen Beckett 01789 299347
- Cllr Keith Lloyd 01789 551856
- Cllr Bill Lowe 01789 552606
- Cllr Juliet Short 01789 294247

Guild & Hathaway

- Cllr Kate Dill-Russell 01789 205819
- Cllr Bill Dowling 01789 293591
- Cllr Jenny Fradgley 01789 262522
- Cllr Shelagh Sandle 01789 268322
- Cllr Clive Thomas 01789 551648

Mount Pleasant

- Cllr John Bicknell 01789 290947
- Cllr Joyce Taylor 01789 268491
- Cllr Chris Wall 07969 239753

Town Council Office 01789 269332
info@stratforduponavontowncouncil.gov.uk
www.stratforduponavontowncouncil.com

WHAT'S ON...

Masquerade Ball at the Stratford Manor on Saturday 28 February, 2009

The Children's Trust Stratford Supporter Group is organising an evening of elegance and mystery with guests being encouraged to come wearing a mask, with a prize for the best fantasy mask. A cocktail reception and delicious meal will be followed by an evening of fun, including live entertainment, a disco, photographer and auction. Tickets cost £35.00 per person and can be purchased from Stephanie on 01789 766960 or e-mail stephanie.jackson@thechildrenstrust.org.uk. Don't miss this spectacular evening, in aid of children with multiple disabilities and complex health needs.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society proudly presents 'The Mikado' at the Civic Hall from Wednesday 11 to Saturday 14 March, 2009. The performance starts at £7.30 p.m. with a

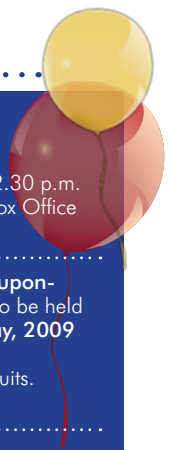
matinee performance on Saturday at 2.30 p.m. Tickets available from the Civic Hall Box Office Tel: 01789 207100.

The Royal British Legion (Stratford-upon-Avon Branch) COFFEE MORNING to be held at the Town Hall on Saturday 15 May, 2009 from 10.00 a.m. until noon.

Entrance - £1.00 inc's coffee and biscuits. EVERYONE WELCOME.

We want to hear from you...

If you want to feature in the regular 'What's On' spot in the next edition of 'Bridging the Gap', please e-mail your advertisement to info@stratforduponavontowncouncil.gov.uk by the end of May, 2009. Regrettably, as space is limited, we cannot guarantee your entry but we shall do our very best to include it.



Bridging the Gap is published by Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council
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AND FINALLY...

You know, somebody actually complimented me on my driving today. They left a little note on the windscreen; it said 'Parking Fine.' So that was nice!