

The war on 'grot' gathers momentum



From the chair

Bill McGinnis
Chairman, Nantwich Town Council

In the last edition of *Talk of the Town* I wrote about a 'war on grot'. I said we were lucky to live in a town with such attractive green spaces, a lake, river, historic buildings, ancient streets and a beautiful church. But I also drew attention to 'grot spots' around the town because, with a few improvements, I feel Nantwich could be even better.

It appears that my words struck a chord. A number of people seem to share my belief that, with a bit of effort, many 'grot spots' can be eliminated. The Town Council received letters and e-mails of support from several residents. People stopped me in town with suggestions for improving the area

and tackling eyesores. I am sure we can all do something to help create a more pleasant environment – whether it's picking up litter (even when it's not our own), helping to support organisations like Nantwich in Bloom, or making sure the Borough or County councils are notified when roads need to be swept, litter bins emptied or pavements repaired.

I am pleased to tell you that we are making some progress on the issues I highlighted in the last *Talk of the Town*. For example

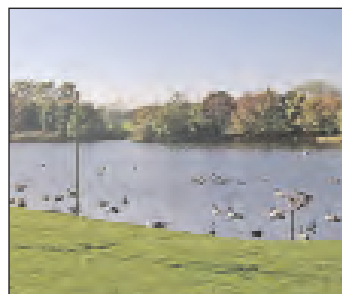
- I said the **station** and land near to it, looks neglected and dilapidated. Arriva, who manage the station, have agreed to flowers, planters and painting to

improve the platforms. Outside the station, Network Rail, who own much adjacent land and the footbridge, have agreed to a meeting to discuss improvements.

- I said the **aqueduct at Welsh Row** was grimy and stained. British Waterways have agreed to talk about the painting and cosmetic works necessary to make this important gateway to the town more attractive.

- Some **York stone paving** in the town centre has already been replaced – a little more needs to be done. Speaking of paving, I am pressing the County Council to take **pedestrianisation** further. We need a truly traffic-free town centre. This is a long term project and progress may be slow but the County Highway Engineers have shown a willingness to explore possibilities.

- I said the **river banks** were overgrown, so that in some places the river is impossible to see. I am delighted that the Borough Council (which maintains the green spaces by the river) has taken on board those observations and in a number of areas vegetation has been cut back so that the view of the water is clear. People have already told me they appreciate this improvement and I've passed their comments on to the Borough Council.



- I said the **lake**, potentially a magnificent asset, is sometimes hidden by weeds and paths are poorly maintained. I can tell you that there are changes in store here too. The Town Council is likely to put money in its budget next year to help with facilities

like viewing points and benches. There are plans for a path around the far side of the lake in the future. Nantwich Riverside officer James Thompson has some suggestions for comprehensive improvements to the lake which will be put forward for consultation and discussion in an early public meeting to be hosted by the Town Council.

- **Mill Island** now has a new path, paid for by the Town Council, to provide an alternative route for residents inconvenienced when the main path across the site needs to be closed. The new path also forms an attractive walk by the river bank. Also in this area, the Borough Council has agreed to carry out some works around the mill race, which is looking dilapidated and untidy.

- Every year, Nantwich in Bloom plants hundreds of **flower bulbs** to help beautify the town. The Town Council intends to provide hundreds more. Pupils from local schools will be planting bluebells and snowdrops in a spot near the railway bridge, close to the river.

- With an unexpected grant of £14,000 from the Borough Council, councillors have decided to employ a **lengthsman**, a contractor to tackle areas which are unkempt and untidy and which need special attention. They have not yet decided exactly where to spend the money but you can be assured it will be put to good use!

All in all, I hope you will agree we are making a reasonable start. None of this will happen overnight but town councillors are fully supporting my theme as Chairman this year, of 'war on grot'. I am confident that the theme will be continued in future.



Not a grot spot. The Chairman was on hand when the Mayor of Crewe and Nantwich, Cllr Maurice Jones, opened the newly widened and surfaced footpath across Mill Island on 14 September. With him are, 1 to r, James Thompson, Nantwich Riverside Officer, Amy Rushton of the County Council Rights of Way section and the Mayoress, Mrs Ann Jones. The Town Council helped to pay for it.

Talk of the Town is published by Nantwich Town Council with the aim of keeping Nantwich residents fully informed about the Council and its activities.

Your Town Councillors

William S McGinnis

Chairman

39 Millfields
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 5HR
Telephone 610755

Weaver Ward

Keith J Cafferty

Vice-Chairman

2 Cobbs Lane Hough
Crewe Cheshire CW2 5JN
Telephone 842560

Wellington Ward

Paul Abbott

6 Gerard Drive
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 5JR
Telephone 623627

Weaver Ward

Mrs Christine M Farrall

19 Mount Drive
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 6JF
Telephone 624335

Birchin Ward

Keith Healey

54 The Broadway
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 6JH
Telephone 626018

Birchin Ward

Stephen F Hope

60 Brereton Drive
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 6HR
Telephone 611618

Barony Ward

John Lewis

16 Lakeside View
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 7GA
Telephone 627507

Wellington Ward

Andrew E Martin

48 London Road Stapeley
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 7JL
Telephone 627740

Birchin Ward

Arthur Moran

16 Gerard Drive
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 5JR
Telephone 624071

Weaver Ward

Mrs Norma Simpson

24 Cherrington Road
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 7AW
Telephone 625399

Wellington Ward

Mrs Joyce I Stockton

35 King Place
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 5NY
Telephone 624904

Barony Ward

Mrs Edith M Williams

32 Wallfields Road
Nantwich Cheshire CW5 5NT
Telephone 611378

Barony Ward

Clerk to the Council

Riddell Graham

From the minutes – the Town Council at work

What has the Town Council been discussing recently? A few snippets from the minutes of their September meeting give a flavour:

Busy Chairman

During July and August the Chairman represented the Council at a variety of events in the town. In addition to other engagements, he

- attended the centenary of the founding of the Scout movement and renewal of the Scout promise on Nantwich Square (at 7.45 in the morning!)

- visited an exhibition at Nantwich Museum on driving safety

- took part in the official opening of Nantwich Cricket Club's new practice nets

- enjoyed a performance by the Nantwich Choral Society at St.Mary's parish church.

- officially opened a new footbridge near Nantwich Lake.

- viewed the BIG Battle staged by the Sealed Knot at Reaseheath.

Farewell Chris, hello Bob

The Town Council said goodbye to Inspector Chris Brierley, who had been head of the Nantwich Police Community Action Team for more than two years. He regularly attended Council and Town Watch meetings and kept councillors up-to-date on policing in the town. His successor, Inspector Robert Hassall, was given a warm welcome by the Council (see page 4).

Borough direct services

David Marren, the Borough Council's Executive Director of Direct Services, attended the Council meeting to give an outline of responsibilities and work undertaken by his department. He touched on

- Negotiations going on for the Borough Council to manage and regulate car parks owned by the Football Club and Malbank School so as to create additional spaces near the town.

- Decriminalisation of parking when the police hand over the enforcement of on-street parking to the Borough Council – scheduled for February 2008.

- Waste collection – alternate



The Mayor of Crewe and Nantwich, the Chairman of Nantwich Town Council and several councillors were among thousands watching the BIG Battle, a major re-enactment of the Battle of Nantwich organised under the auspices of Nantwich Now at Reaseheath over the August bank holiday.

weekly collections had been introduced relatively smoothly – partly because residents were familiar with using more than one bin and partly because they were strong supporters of recycling. The Borough was one of the national leaders in reclamation and recycling. But in response to a question Mr Marren explained that door-step glass recycling was impractical and there were no plans to introduce it.

Mill Island

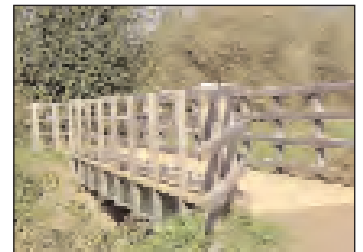
The Council reluctantly declined to contribute towards the drainage of Mill Island. While they would like to see the site more suitable for major events and exhibitions, they felt the responsibility for drainage lay with the site owners, the Borough Council.

Nantwich Link

Councillors noted that the Council had a regular page in *Nantwich Link*, an advertising publication distributed throughout the town. They welcomed it as another means of communicating news of their activities.

Peppers Bowling Club

The Council was updated on the position of Peppers Bowling Club. A bowling club had operated since 1897 at the Mill Street green next to the former Liberal club, later Peppers, the restaurant, and now Residence, a bar and restaurant. The owners of the building (who were not the same as the operators of Residence) did not wish to renew the bowling club's lease.



The new footbridge near Nantwich lake officially opened by the Chairman.

The club is required to leave by January 2008 and is looking for a new home.

First responders

A grant request from Nantwich First Responders was considered. This is an organisation which relies heavily on sponsorship and grant funding. They operate a fast response vehicle to attend residents and administer emergency treatment. Because of their location in Nantwich and because they use a car rather than an ambulance, they are able to provide rapid help. The Council agreed to continue its support for this important service.

ChALC

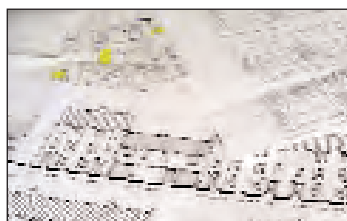
The Council nominated two councillors to attend the annual general meeting of Cheshire Association of Local Councils in October. This is a meeting of representatives of parish and town councils from all over Cheshire. A particularly important topic to be discussed was the proposed re-organisation of local government. Whatever happens, the Town Council feel a strong voice for local people is essential.

Keeping to the Code

When town councillors are elected, they agree to abide by a Code of Conduct. The Code requires that councillors should behave fairly, act with the public good in mind and declare any financial or other interests they may have. It is worth noting that councillors give their time freely; they receive no payment.

Nantwich Town Council Chairman Bill McGinnis, comments "One of the most important paragraphs of the Code requires councillors not to take part in a decision if it affects them directly. For example, a town councillor living next to a property which was the subject of a planning application would not be able to take part in the discussion or vote on that application. The councillor would have an interest which people might feel affected his or her judgment and would have to leave the room while the application was being considered."

A copy of the Code can be seen at the council offices or on the website of The Standards Board for England which oversees the conduct of all councillors.



Under the Code, a councillor who might be biased could not comment on planning applications.

Quality status

Quality Status is a sort of kite mark for councils. If a council has quality status it means it has a properly qualified clerk and has passed an inspection of the way it operates. In particular, it has to show it keeps proper accounts, publishes agendas and minutes regularly, communicates by means such as a newsletter and website and plays a full part in community life. Nantwich Town Council has submitted an application for quality status and is now awaiting the result.

That £14,000: what you would do

The last edition of *Talk of the Town* mentioned a grant of £14,000 received from the Borough Council and asked for ideas for using it.

There was a great response and lots of suggestions. The Town Council examined all of them at a committee meeting on 24 September. Some of the suggestions were already being considered or were the responsibility of other bodies. The Town Council tried to avoid proposals which were for other bodies to carry out and passed them on. Among others, it considered suggestions to

- widen the pavement and restrict traffic in Pillory Street
- extend paths, install benches, information board etc at Nantwich lake
- provide mains power on The Square to stop the use of a noisy generator
- construct a water wheel to generate electricity, probably at Mill Island bridge
- tidy All Saints cemetery
- improve taxi ranks
- erect additional notice boards
- enhance the town centre by the display of colourful flags
- plant trees on the new section of Waterlode
- employ a 'lengthsman' to tackle 'grot spots'
- install special football nets on the Barony

● provide more seating around the town

● improve drainage and install an electricity source on Mill Island.

The suggestion which most appealed to councillors was 'a lengthsman' * – that is someone, probably a contractor, who would undertake extra cleaning or additional clearing of vegetation where it is needed. Councillors will be discussing 'who' and 'where' in the coming weeks and the grant will be spent on that.

However, two suggestions, while they didn't get the most votes, will be considered further.

Vice-Chairman Keith Cafferty explains, "We were especially taken with the idea of improvements to the lake and a display of banners or flags to add a splash of additional colour to the town centre. These sorts of things benefit everyone – residents can enjoy them and they also attract visitors."

The Council will be discussing whether they can put some money towards these proposals when they look at next year's budget in a few weeks time.

Whether your suggestions have been taken up or not, the Council would like to thank people for their interest and enthusiasm.

* Lengthsman? A person employed to maintain a section of railway or road says the Oxford Dictionary. Lengthsman's Cottage is a not uncommon house name and address around the country.

Blooming good news

Its official, Nantwich is the Best Town in the North West.

They declared it at the North West in Bloom Award ceremony.

That's five years in a row that we have won this award. Nantwich also won the Best Commercial Effort Award. Furthermore the town was chosen to represent the North West in the Royal Horticultural Society Britain in Bloom Competition in 2008.

We keep doing better despite intense competition and ever widening criteria. When Nantwich first entered it was mainly about shrubs and floral displays. Now, street cleaning, recycling, community involvement, schools, planting for wildlife and more also play an important part.

But we who live or work in Nantwich, can also play our part.

The Nantwich in Bloom committee do their bit. We have planted thousands of trees down by the riverside and thousands of spring flowering bulbs around the town. The wild flower meadows are being improved. Many planters in the town are planted and maintained by members.

We do not work alone. Nantwich Town Council is a considerable support and the Borough's Direct Services also give us magnificent support and co operation. The traders and licensed premises efforts are rewarding and have now been acknowledged by the latest award. Margaret Thrower, who judges the commercial premises, is always impressed with the standard which helps to make Nantwich her favourite place to come.

Front gardens play an important part and in the next issue of *Talk of the Town* we will be saying more about our front garden competition.

At the end of the day however the competitions are a means to an end. The reason for all the hard work is to make our town a better place to live, work, shop and play. So please play your part and help Nantwich win GOLD in next year's competition.

Doug Butterill
Chairman, Nantwich in Bloom.

Town service



Father John Daly

many organisations which combine to form our community in Nantwich. In October, Father

Each year, a church service is held to mark our civic year. It brings together representatives

from the

John Daly welcomed the Deputy Mayor and the Chief Executive from the Borough Council as they joined our town councillors and community leaders for a service of worship at the Roman Catholic Church of St. Anne in Pillory Street.

Father Daly delivered a stimulating sermon on 'service' and the congregation enjoyed a selection of rousing hymns – not to mention the generous hospitality offered by the people of St. Anne's at the conclusion!

Inspector Hassall introduces himself. And reports crime down by 21%.

Firstly, you may not be aware that Inspector Chris Brierley has moved to the County headquarters in Winsford on a major project and I have been asked to take over his role in Nantwich. I am not new to the area, having begun my policing career in the old Crewe division, which included the present Nantwich Neighbourhood Policing Unit (NPU) area. I have worked across the whole of the Eastern area in a number of roles including neighbourhood policing and a significant amount of service as a detective.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairman and members of the Town Council for their support for me in this new role and helping me understand the dynamics of the town.

Crime down

Nantwich has seen a reduction in all types of crime, although we can't be complacent because there will always be incidents that have an effect on the individual and the community.

I believe one of the real challenges is addressing the 'reassurance gap' that sometimes exists. We have just passed the half year for crime recording at the end of September and I have compared them to the same period last year. There is a reduction of just under 21%. "Statistics!", I hear you say. But this figure equates to 215 fewer victims of crime in this six months than the previous year, including 52 fewer victims of violence.

Under-age drinking

I believe that a major issue for us all is the issue of under-age drinking and proxy buying. This is where people of legal age purchase alcohol for persons under the legal age. I am sad to say that this includes a number of parents. This is an area we will be looking at on the run up to the Christmas period.

Still on his bike

Finally, on a lighter note, a number of you will have seen Constable Phil Evans around the town on his mountain bike. Well,



Top Inspector Robert Hassall has taken over the Nantwich Neighbourhood Policing Unit. And one of his officers is PC Phil Evans (**above**) who can still be seen around town on his bicycle. But not on his 1984 mount. These days, it is a mountain bike. Ideal for getting round his patch quickly and efficiently.

Phil has kindly allowed me to publish a picture of him on his bike at Crewe in 1984 so that we can see how things move on.

Happy Christmas!

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a safe and quiet Christmas period.

Robert Hassall

Inspector, Nantwich Neighbourhood Policing Unit.

Hire Brookfield Hall

Brookfield Hall is available for hire for community use.

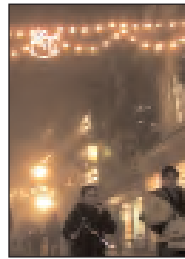
Charges are £25 per session (morning, afternoon or evening) for the main hall and £20 per day for the committee room.

Enquiries to the town clerk on (01270) 619224.

Looking forward – fun to come



The Chairman's Dance, Civic Hall, Friday 30 November. Music will be provided by the Joe Loss Orchestra led by Todd Miller. All in aid of The Royal British Legion. Tickets cost £15 and can be obtained from the Tourist Information Centre (01270 537359) or the Nantwich Town Council (01270 619224).



Christmas lights will be even brighter this year. Why? Because the Town Council has increased its contribution from £1000 to £5500. 'It will give a boost to the town.', says Chairman Bill McGinnis. The lights, which are provided and erected by the Borough Council, will be switched on during a street party on Saturday 1 December.



Holly Holy Day. The 1644 Battle of Nantwich will be re-enacted on Mill Island on Saturday 26 January 2008. This is the day when the Royalist and Parliamentarian regiments of the Sealed Knot come from all over the United Kingdom to liven up our winter and attract many visitors to the town.



Look forward to summer. **Nantwich Fun Day 2008** is scheduled for Saturday 12 July. It looks set to be even bigger and better. If you would like to take part in deciding what events and attractions would make an ideal Fun Day, ring Cllr Keith Cafferty on (01270) 842560.

Diary 2007

November

- 12 Town Council meeting 7.00pm Brookfield Hall
- 30 The Chairman's charity dance in aid of The Royal British Legion. Todd Miller and the Joe Loss Orchestra, Nantwich Civic Hall.

December

- 1 Town Lights switch-on.
- 17 Town Council meeting 7.00pm Brookfield Hall

January

- 14 Town Council meeting 7.00pm Brookfield Hall
- 26 Holly Holy Day

Meetings of Nantwich Town Council are held at Brookfield Hall at 7.00pm on a Monday evening. They are public meetings and you are welcome to attend. Before formal business begins, there is an open forum at which you are invited to make any points or ask questions of your councillors.

Contact the Town Clerk

by telephone (01270) 619224

by fax (01270) 619225

by e-mail

nantwichtc@nantwichtowncouncil.gov.uk

by letter Nantwich Town Council Brookfield Hall Shrewbridge Road Nantwich Cheshire CW5 7AB

Website

www.nantwichtowncouncil.gov.uk



If you've not already seen it, take a look at the Town Council website. 'Nantwich Town Council' in Google finds it straightaway. There's a potted history of the town, minutes of meetings, details of councillors, latest news, links to local groups and organisations and much more...