

Newbury Town Council

Mayor's report for Full Council Meeting on 30 October 2017

This report covers the period from end of June to 23rd October. Marion, the Mayoress, has accompanied me to many of the events. We were made to feel most welcome and appreciated.

It is clear that there are many groups involved in care, education, a variety of sporting, heritage and cultural activities in the town.

Thank you to those who have supported the mayor's coffee mornings. They have been a huge success with £361 (which has been match funded) for the Rosemary Appeal and £412 for the 1st Wash Common Scout Hut Rebuilding Project. Other coffee mornings attended were in aid of Alopecia Society, Save the Children and Water Aid organised by Eight Bells, Guides and at Winchcombe Place for the Rosemary Appeal.

Care home garden parties and art events took place at the Argyles, Willows Edge and Donnington Care Home. A visit was made to the newly built Alexander Devine Children's Hospice. Also a garden party was held by West Berks Hospital, Donnington Ward where we could explore their sensory garden.

AGMS were attended for Street Pastors, Loose Ends, Home Start, Dingley's Promise and Community Council in Berkshire.

A variety of musical events including the Scots Guards Beating the Retreat at Hermitage, Hungerford Band, Newbury Rock Choir and the Thatcham Festival Finale.

The Mayor's Drive in July, enjoyed by the over 75s, was held on a hot day at West Woodhay House. The picnic boxes, prepared earlier in the day, at Fair Close by volunteers, including the mayor, were enjoyed!

We supported Samaritans Awareness, Stopover (stop smoking) and TSB's cake sale held in aid of Rapid Response Cars.

Achievements were recognised at the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Newbury College Technology Skills and Art, Graduation and F.E. awards, Berkshire Training Services and Lord Lieutenant's Reservist and Cadets Awards.

The Council's Newbury in Bloom Event was a great success with the Awards Evening being held at the Corn Exchange. Prizes were presented at Southbys Allotment Open Day and Wash Common Garden and Craft Show.

Thanks to David Fish for organizing another enjoyable and successful Charity Golf Day where I presented the prizes.

Several religious events took place, celebrating the diverse and integrated society of our community including the colourful Rathayatra Festival with a chariot drawn through Northbrook Street to Victoria Park to the chant of Hare Krishna all the way, Onam Festival and Diwali. We took part in Bollywood dancing! St George's Church, Wash Common welcomed us to the Benefice Service for St George and St John, licensing of the new vicar and celebration of completion of their building project.

Sporting events were AFC Newbury football teams' awards, Berkshire Schools Summer Festival at Bishan Abbey and Little Bears Nursery sports day.

Ribbons were cut at the opening of the Ugly Duckling Pottery Painting Coffee House, St Mary's Shaw Church Flower Festival and the top floor opening at Gracewell Care Home.

The Town Hall hosted a Heritage Day display, blue plaques were unveiled for James Money and the Brewing industry.

Newbury Carnival was a vibrant and popular event. Hundreds attended the Corn Exchange Crossing Lines Project, held in Northcroft Park. Also popular was Greenham Common's One Hundred Years War and Peace production.

By taking part in a blindfold walk in the Market Place the difficulties and obstructions encountered by visually impaired people became a reality to me.

Other engagements included BNI and Buzz Connect networking events, Newtown Cemetery Open Evening, Freemasons 300 years open morning, Armed Forces flag raising,, Newbury Weekly News visit, Waterways Festival, Newbury Art Group Exhibition, Chalkfest, 100th birthday party, The Common Good book launch, Battle of Britain wreath laying, United Nations supper, Apple Day, Spinners, Weavers and Dyers exhibition and lunch, Launch of NWN over 80s Parcel Fund, National Older Person's Day, Opening of St Gabriel's School Sixth Form Centre, Thatcham Mayor's Charity Quiz and opening the ever popular Michaelmas Fair.

We opened St Bartholomew's summer fete and judged their cooking competition. We judged cupcakes at Speenhamland fete. Trinity School hosted house speeches, sports personality, dance festival and house performing arts events.

Recently at Local Democracy Fortnight I was pleased to welcome, to the Town Hall, St Nicolas, Fir Tree Lane, Speenhamland, St Joseph's and Falkland Schools. Two more are coming in November.

Our first sixth form debating competition, webcast live, was very successful and may become an annual event.

My engagements demonstrate the vast array of activities that take place in our area and I look forward to more in the coming months.

Finally, my earliest engagement was a 06.45 a.m. networking breakfast event and the fastest was on the Screamer at the fair.

David Fenn

Newbury Town Mayor.