



## Ashby de la Zouch Town Council

### Annual Report 2017/2018



The Mayor on a twinning visit to Pithiviers June 2017.

**Town Mayor.**

Councillor Jim Houlst.

**Deputy Town Mayor.**

Councillor J.G. Coxon.

**Leader of the Council.**

Councillor J. G. Coxon.

**Ward**

Ivanhoe Ward

Castle Ward

Castle Ward

**Councillors:**

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Councillor Mrs D Whetton

Blackfordby Ward

22 Main Street,

Blackfordby, Swadlincote DE11 8AD

Tel: 01283 212741

Email: [info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk).



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Councillor J A Green

Blackfordby Ward

19 North Close,

Blackfordby

Swadlincote, Derbyshire

Tel: 07842 120394

Email: [info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk).



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Councillor J G Coxon  
Highfield House,  
Leicester Road  
New Packington,  
Ashby de la Zouch LE65 1TQ  
Tel: 01530 414300  
Email: [info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk).

Castle Ward



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Councillor N J Rushton  
Hood House,  
19 Lower Church Street  
Ashby de la Zouch LE65 1AB  
Tel: 01530 417227  
Email: [njrushton@leics.gov.uk](mailto:njrushton@leics.gov.uk).

Castle Ward



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Councillor Mrs M Tuckey  
3 Huntingdon Road  
Ashby de la Zouch LE65 2NH  
Tel: 01530 413434  
Email: [marjoh@btinternet.com](mailto:marjoh@btinternet.com).

Castle Ward



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Councillor R D Bayliss  
56 Western Close  
Ashby de la Zouch LE65 2FB  
Tel: 01530 411055  
E Mail: [info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk).

Holywell Ward



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Councillor A Badger  
34 Oak Crescent  
Ashby de la Zouch LE65 1FX  
Email: [info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk).

Holywell Ward



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Councillor Mrs M Austin-Mills  
9 Flora Grove  
Ashby de la Zouch  
LE65 1FF  
Tel: 01530 457155  
E Mail: [maustinmills@hotmail.com](mailto:maustinmills@hotmail.com).

Holywell Ward



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Councillor R Bradley  
16 Castle Way  
Ashby de la Zouch  
LE65 2RY  
Email: [randbradley@totalise.co.uk](mailto:randbradley@totalise.co.uk).

Ivanhoe Ward



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Councillor S J Houtt  
1 Shellbrook Close  
Ashby de la Zouch  
LE65 1UJ  
Tel: 01530 468179  
E Mail: [tractorjim@gmail.com](mailto:tractorjim@gmail.com).

Ivanhoe Ward





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Councillor J Mills  
9 Flora Grove  
Ashby de la Zouch  
LE65 1FF  
Tel: 07884 111382  
Email: [JoshAAMills@gmail.com](mailto:JoshAAMills@gmail.com).

Ivanhoe Ward



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Councillor Mrs G Houlton  
1 Shellbrook Close  
Ashby de la Zouch  
LE65 1UJ  
Tel: 01530 468179  
E Mail: [info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk).

Money Hill Ward



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Councillor M Ball

Money Hill Ward

'Braemar'

88 Ashby Road

Donisthorpe

DE12 7QG

Email: [Mike\\_Ball55@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Mike_Ball55@hotmail.co.uk).



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Councillor G A Allman

Money Hill Ward

c/o the Town Council office

Tel: 07765 251208

E Mail: [graham@ga-select.com](mailto:graham@ga-select.com).





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Councillor D Bigby  
16 Tower Gardens  
Ashby de la Zouch  
LE65 2GZ  
Tel: 01530 414960  
Email: [david@bigby.eu](mailto:david@bigby.eu).

Willesley Ward



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Councillor R Bebbington  
39 Windsor Road  
Ashby de la Zouch  
LE65 1TW  
Tel: 01530 563920  
Email: [info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk)

Willesley Ward



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Councillor D J G Jones  
Oakfield House  
Tamworth Road  
Ashby de la Zouch  
LE65 2PR  
Tel: 01530 415692  
Email: [info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk).

Willesley Ward



### **COUNCILLOR SURGERIES.**

Councillor surgeries are held every quarter at Legion House. This is an opportunity for members of the public to meet with their elected representatives to ask questions about any issue with respect to the running of the parish.

Dates of the surgeries are advertised on the Town Council website and in 'Ashby Life'. The dates for 2017/18 were as follows:

- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May.
- Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September.
- Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018.
- 19<sup>th</sup> March.
- 21<sup>st</sup> May.

A number of Town Councillors are also District Councillors and the Leader of the Town Council is also the elected member for the town to Leicestershire County Council along with Councillor Nick Rushton who is also the Leader of Leicestershire County Council.

## **COMMITTEE STRUCTURE & MEMBERSHIP 2017/18.**

### **PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE:**

Councillor Jones (Chairman).  
Councillor Ball (Vice-Chairman).  
Councillor Allman.  
Councillor Badger  
Councillor Bayliss.  
Councillor Coxon.  
Councillor S. J. Hoult  
Councillor Mrs M. Tuckey.  
Councillor Bigby.  
Councillor Green.  
Councillor Mrs D. Whetton.

### **LICENSING COMMITTEE:**

Councillor Mrs M. Tuckey (Chairman).  
Councillor S. J. Hoult (Vice-Chairman).  
Councillor Allman.  
Councillor Badger.  
Councillor Ball.  
Councillor Bayliss.  
Councillor Coxon.  
Councillor Jones.  
Councillor Bigby.  
Councillor Green.  
Councillor Mrs D. Whetton.

### **PARKS & CEMETERY COMMITTEE:**

Councillor Bayliss (Chairman).  
Councillor Badger (Vice-Chairman).  
Councillor Bebbington.  
Councillor Bradley.  
Councillor Coxon.  
Councillor S. J. Hoult.  
Councillor Mrs G. Hoult.  
Councillor Jones.  
Councillor Bigby.  
Councillor Mrs D. Whetton.  
Councillor Mills.

### **FINANCE, TOURISM & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE:**

Councillor Rushton (Chairman).  
Councillor Bradley (Vice-Chairman).  
Councillor Ball.  
Councillor Bayliss.  
Councillor Bebbington.  
Councillor Coxon.  
Councillor Mrs G. Hoult.  
Councillor Mrs M. Tuckey.

Councillor Bigby.  
Councillor Mrs D. Whetton.  
Councillor Mrs M. Austin-Mills.

**EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE:**

Councillor Mrs G. Houlton (Chairman).  
Councillor Bebbington (Vice Chairman).  
Councillor Bayliss.  
Councillor Coxon.  
Councillor Jones.  
Councillor Mrs M. Tuckey.  
Councillor Bigby.  
Councillor Mrs M. Austin-Mills.

**APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS 2017/18.**

- **New Albion Liaison Committee:** Councillor S.J. Houlton.
- **Ashby de la Zouch Pithiviers Association:** Councillor Mrs M. Tuckey.
- **Ashby de la Zouch Educational Foundation:** Councillor Mrs M. Tuckey.
- **Ashby de la Zouch Endowed Schools Foundation:** Mrs A. Rushton.
- **Ashby de la Zouch Museum:** Councillor S. J. Houlton.
- **Lount Landfill Liaison Committee:** Councillors S. J. Houlton & Ball.
- **Ashby Town Team:** Councillor Jones.
- **Willesley Residents Association:** Councillors Jones, Bebbington & Bigby.
- **Litter/fly-posting/fly-tipping Champion:** Mr R. Gough.
- **Ashby de la Zouch Sports Ambassador:** Councillor Bebbington.
- **Friends of Westfields Group:** Councillors S.J. Houlton, Bradley & Mills.
- **Hood Park/Ivanhoe Steering Committee:** Councillor Bebbington.
- **Ashby Relief in Sickness Fund (Nominative Trustee):** Councillor S.J. Houlton.
- **Ashby de la Zouch & District Agricultural Society Ltd:** Councillor Mrs M. Tuckey.
- **Ashby Street Pastors:** Councillor Badger.
- **Flood Warden:** Mr Brian Fisher.
- **Internal Auditor:** Mr Ian Fraser.
- **External Auditors:** PKF Littlejohn LLP, 1 Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf, London E14 4HD.

- **Electorate:** 11,575 (2017); **Population:** 13,689 (2011)
- **Town Council Offices:**  
Legion House, Legion House, South Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire, LE65 1BQ.  
Opening Hours: 8.30am - 1.00pm Monday – Friday or by arrangement.
- **Town Clerk:** Jack Fargher.
- **Deputy Town Clerk:** Mrs K. Edwards.
- **Town Council Office Telephone:** 01530 416961.
- **Town Council Email address:** [info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk).
- **Town Council Website:** [www.ashbydelazouch.info](http://www.ashbydelazouch.info).
- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/Ashbytowncouncil/>
- **Twitter:** @AshbyTCouncil.

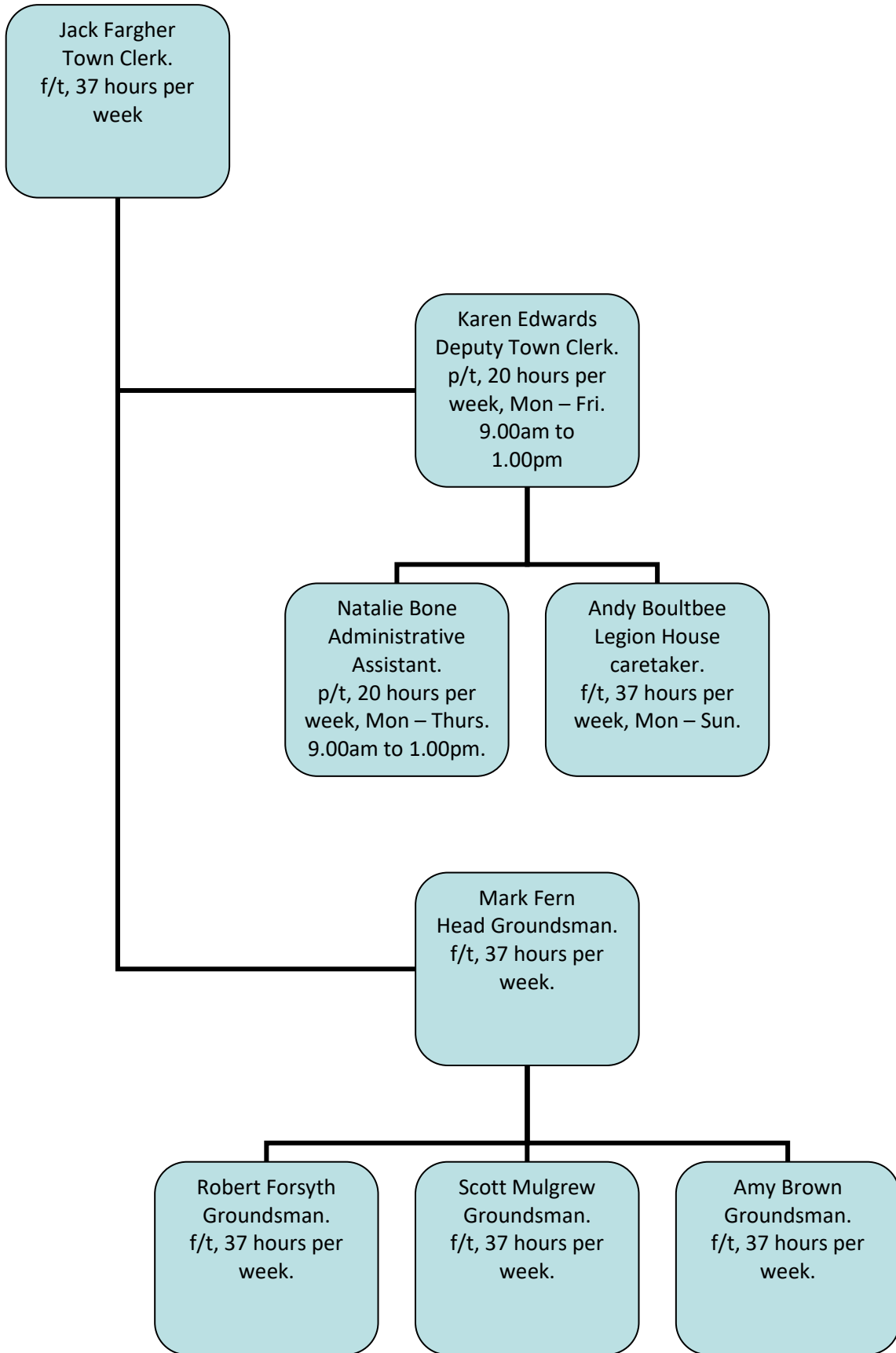


**Jack Fargher, Town Clerk**



**Karen Edwards, Deputy Town Clerk**

**OFFICERS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL.**



## **FOREWORD BY THE LEADER OF THE TOWN COUNCIL.**

It gives me great pleasure to present the Annual Report of the Town Council for the financial year 2017/18. As you will read in this report it has been another very busy and eventful year for the Town Council and for the town of Ashby. We have made some real progress in improving the services that we provide and in putting on some first-class events.

### **Local Council Award Scheme.**

I was absolutely delighted to receive the news that the Town Council has been awarded the Local Council Award Scheme Gold Award. This is the highest award possible under the current scheme. We are only the second local council within Leicestershire and Rutland to be awarded gold and the first town council to do so (and the only one to date).

Councillor Guy Jackson, Chairman of the Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils, presented the certificate of the Local Council Award Scheme Quality Gold Award to the Chairman of the Council and addressed the Town Council as follows:

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here this evening recognising the fantastic work that Ashby Town Council undertakes for its residents and those who work and run businesses here. This work has been formally recognised by the council achieving the top level of the Local Council Award Scheme, Quality Gold.

Ashby Town Council is only the second of the 195 local councils across Leicestershire and Rutland to be awarded Quality Gold, and the fact that your council has met and often exceeded the rigorous criteria specified at this level is a great achievement. Notably the panel that assessed Ashby Town Council gave particular praise to the council by commenting that it was very thorough and demonstrated excellent work with regards to delivering value for money, meeting its duties in relation to bio-diversity and crime & disorder, and providing leadership in planning for the future of the community.

As one of the largest and most active of LRALC’s member councils it is excellent to see the council visibly demonstrating leadership in the field of excellence through its commitment to the Local Council Award Scheme.

Finally, recognition needs to be given to the Town Clerk, Jack Fargher, for the hard work he put in to the council’s submission and ensuring that your work as the Town Council is recognised and rewarded.”

### **Purple Flag.**

I was also delighted that Ashby achieved ‘Purple Flag’ accreditation which recognises a commitment to raising the standard and broadening the appeal of town and city centres at night. An extract for the assessors’ report is worth reproducing here:

“Ashby is a small prosperous ex mining community. Though long ago, the legacy is that Ashby has prospered into a very nice destination at the expense of other nearby communities. With its long and short-term heritage, historic buildings, strong sense of community and identity, Ashby is NW Leicester’s jewel.”

I whole-heartedly agree.



I would like to thank all members of the Town Council who give their time freely and willingly to support the work of the Council. In particular, I would like to thank the Chairmen of the Committees without whom the work of the Town Council would not be possible and to Councillor Jim Hault who has been Mayor for the year. Jim is a very experienced Councillor and this is his second stint as Mayor for the town and he has executed his civic duties as Mayor, supported very ably by his wife Gill, with real gusto and enthusiasm.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the staff of the Town Council for their unstinting efforts throughout the year.

**Councillor John Coxon.**  
**Leader of the Town Council.**  
**March 2018.**



**The Mayor of the town with the team of Ashby Tool Box.**

## REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL 2017/18.

It has been a busy and eventful year of which there have been many highlights. This is a list of the events that I have attended on behalf of the Town Council:

- 27<sup>th</sup> May 2017 Ashby Arts Festival opening & prize giving
- 12<sup>th</sup> June Visit to 'Hope House' - Hospice Hope
- 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> June Twinning Visit to Pithiviers
- 20<sup>th</sup> June Ivanhoe College Awards Evening
- 27<sup>th</sup> June Photo call for installation of 2x Defibrillators in the town centre
- 28<sup>th</sup> June Scouts Awards Evening @ Willesley Campsite
- 2<sup>nd</sup> July Official opening of Ashby's Festival of Transport
- 7<sup>th</sup> July Ashby Hastings Cricket Club Charity Family Fun Night
- 8<sup>th</sup> July Ashby Tennis Club Charity Open Day (Deputy Mayor)
- 9<sup>th</sup> July Ashby Show
- 13<sup>th</sup> July 4<sup>th</sup> Ashby Scouts AGM & Awards Evening
- 24<sup>th</sup> July Trent Rivers Trust Launch Day
- 30<sup>th</sup> July Jim's Tractor Run & Family Fun Day 2017
- 6<sup>th</sup> September Opening of re-furbished Kwik Fit
- 18<sup>th</sup> September Ashby Statutes
- 30<sup>th</sup> September Official opening of redeveloped areas in Ashby Baptist Church
- 30<sup>th</sup> September Official opening of St Helens Community Heritage Centre
- 1<sup>st</sup> October Lt Col Philip Bent commemoration (Deputy Mayor)
- 7<sup>th</sup> October Ashby FABulous event
- 12<sup>th</sup> October Relaunch reception at Fitness Republic
- 1<sup>st</sup> November Official opening of M&S Ashby
- 7<sup>th</sup> November Photo call at North Street Car Park
- 9<sup>th</sup> November Purple Flag photo call
- 10<sup>th</sup> November Ashby Concert Band Poppy Appeal
- 12<sup>th</sup> November Remembrance Sunday
- 16<sup>th</sup> November Ashby Project Launch @ Rebound
- 1<sup>st</sup> December Holy Trinity Church Christmas Tree Festival
- 2<sup>nd</sup> December Christmas In Ashby event
- 3<sup>rd</sup> December Santa Fun Run & Walk
- 3<sup>rd</sup> December Hospice Hope Lights of Love
- 4<sup>th</sup> December Holy Trinity Church Advent Carol Service
- 17<sup>th</sup> December NWLDC Chairman's & Civic Community Carol Service
- 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018 Opening of Bilingual Nursery in Ashby
- 28<sup>th</sup> January Ashby Street Pastors AGM & Commissioning Service
- 2<sup>nd</sup> March Visit to Wavin's Pipeworks in Blackfordby
- 12<sup>th</sup> March Commonwealth Day
- 17<sup>th</sup> March Ashby Big Tidy Up
- 28<sup>th</sup> April Mayor's Civic Dinner @ The Appleby Inn
- 4<sup>th</sup> May Official opening of Primary PPA Cover Ltd
- 7<sup>th</sup> May Friends of Westfields Family Funday
- 17<sup>th</sup> May Re-opening of Ferrers Arms, Lount following re-furbishment
- 20<sup>th</sup> May Mayor's Civic Service

I would like to thank Ashby de la Zouch Town Councillors for giving me this opportunity it has been an honour and a privilege to represent the Council and our town.

My year has gone well because of the support and hard work put in by many, especially by the Town Clerk, Jack Fargher, Deputy Town Clerk, Karen Edwards, and Natalie Bone, Administrative Assistant. It has been much appreciated thank you. Special thanks should also go to Councillor John Coxon, the Leader of the Town Council, for his continued support.

**Councillor Jim Hoult.**  
**Chairman of the Council 2017/18.**



**Lt. Col.Philip Bent VC DSO’s great nephew and great, great nephew at the unveiling of the plaque in the War Memorial garden on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death.**

### **Ashby de la Zouch Urban District Council: Chairmen.**

1895 – 1901	J. German.
1901 – 1902	J. P. Adcock.
1902 – 1903	T. Jesson.
1903 – 1904	T.W. Davenport.
1904 – 1907	J. German.
1907 – 1908	T. Jesson.
1908 – 1909	H. German.
1909 – 1910	G. Brown.
1910 – 1912	H. German.
1912 – 1913	J. Canner.
1913 – 1914	S.S. Sturgess.
1914 – 1915	T. Orton.
1915 – 1916	G.D. Orchard.
1916 – 1917	C.H. Parsons.
1917 – 1918	A. Tugby.
1918 – 1922	Col. G. German.
1922 – 1923	G.B. Blakesley.
1923 – 1924	J.J. German.
1924 – 1925	W. Smedley.
1925 – 1931	T. Orton.
1931 – 1932	J.J. German.
1932 – 1934	J. Bullen.
1934 – 1936	J.J. Staley.
1936 – 1938	L.M. Darlow.
1938 – 1941	T. Orton.
1941 – 1944	A.G. Atkinson.
1944 – 1946	L. Marshall.
1946 – 1947	A.G. Atkinson.
1947 – 1948	P.M. Webster.
1949 – 1958	G.E.A. Ridgway.
1958 – 1962	C.R. Harvey.
1962 – 1964	Miss J.A. Smedley.
1964 – 1966	W.J.C. Bowker.
1966 – 1968	Dr. F.G. Griffith.
1968 – 1970	G.F. Dodd.
1970 – 1971	J.E. Knight.
1971 – 1972	Miss J.A. Smedley.
1972 – 1974	D.A. Watson.

### **Ashby de la Zouch Town Council: Mayors.**

1974 – 1976	J. Dawkins.
1976 – 1978	Mrs A. Hall.
1978 – 1979	D.A. Watson.
1979 – 1980	K.R. Watson.
1980 – 1981	Miss R. Payne.
1981 – 1982	Mrs M.N. Holdich.
1982 – 1983	G.F. Dodd.
1983 – 1984	Mrs P.A. Cort.
1984 – 1985	J.R. Schofield.
1985 – 1986	G.R. Cort.
1986 – 1987	P.D. Thompson.

1987 – 1988	Mrs P.A. Cort.
1988 – 1989	P.M. Nash.
1989 – 1990	P.D. Thompson.
1990 – 1991	Mrs C.M. Schofield.
1991 – 1992	Mrs A.M. Hall.
1992 – 1993	D.A. Watson.
1993 – 1994	R.D. Bayliss.
1994 – 1995	J.B. Mitchell.
1995 – 1996	A.P. Evans.
1996 – 1997	J.E. Miles.
1997 – 1998	G. Tacey.
1998 – 1999	J.B. Mitchell.
1999 – 2000	E. Avins.
2000 – 2001	G.W. Pointon.
2001 – 2002	D.P. Whetton.
2002 – 2003	Mrs P. J. Hopkins.
2003 – 2004	G.W. Pointon.
2004 – 2005	D.P. Whetton.
2005 – 2006	E. Palmer.
2006 – 2007	G.W. Pointon.
2007 – 2008	D.J. Price.
2008 – 2009	Mrs M.E. Tuckey.
2009 – 2010	G.A. Allman.
2010 – 2011	S.J. Hoult.
2011 – 2012	R.K. Bebbington.
2012 - 2013	D.J.G. Jones.
2013 – 2014	Mrs G. Hoult.
2014 – 2015	A. Badger.
2015 – 2016	Mrs M.E. Tuckey.
2016 – 2017	M. Ball.
2017 – 2018	S.J. Hoult.

**Leader of the Town Council.**

2007 – present	J. G. Coxon.
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**Town Clerks.**

1895 – 1921	W.A. Musson.
1921 – 1942	W.P. Musson.
1942 – 1970	S.E. Wilkinson.
1970 – 1974	R.F. Bullen.
1974 – 1983	H. Pass.
1983 – 1991	W. Gregory.
1991 – 2000	Mrs A. Bettinson.
2000 – 2001	J. White (interim appointment).
2001 – 2010	C. R. Gay.
2010 – present	J. Fargher.



## Committee Reports.

### FINANCE, TOURISM & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE.

The main roles of the Finance, Tourism and Administration Committee are to ensure that the Town Councils finances are properly managed and to advise the Town Council upon a suitable level of income and expenditure to meet our operational needs. It also oversees the administration of the Town Council and the management of Legion House. Additionally, the Committee has responsibility for the governance of the 'Ashby Project' for the lifetime of the project.

#### **Financial Support Grant aid.**

The Committee is pleased to be able to offer financial assistance to local groups. It approved the following applications to the Town Council from community and voluntary groups in the last financial year:

<b>RECIPIENT</b>	<b>£</b>
Ashby Museum	9,000.00
Ashby Open Gardens	212.00
Ashby Bowling Club	250.00
Ashby Hockey Club	500.00
St. Helen's Church	500.00
Ashby Dramatic Society	1,500.00
Blackfordby Open Gardens	1,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,962.00</b>



**Santa Fun Run/Walk 2017.**

## **The Ashby Project.**

During the summer of 2016 discussions took place with NWLDC on how it can support the town to deliver a number of projects to improve the public realm, encourage footfall, provide additional car parking capacity and enhance the heritage and visitor potential of the town's assets.

The framework within which these discussions took place is the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for Ashby. There are a number of ideas, concepts, suggestions and projects which emerged from the focus groups and public consultations which took place as part of the preparation of the plan which were unable to be taken forward at that time either because they fell outside of the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan or due to lack of resources.

NWLDC Cabinet at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2016 approved the allocation of £300,000 to one off projects which support the delivery of aspects of the emerging Ashby Neighbourhood Plan. It also approved the re-allocation of the £50,000 which had previously ear-marked by Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2015 to support the free guest wi-fi in the town centre to the St. Helen's churchyard improvements project.

Of this £300,000 for the one-off projects, £100,000 was allocated to the Cultural & Leisure Quarter Project (see below) as the Town Council's contribution. It is also envisaged that the £34k section 106 contribution from the Aldi development at Dent's Road [09/00430/FULM] will be allocated to fund improvements to the public realm.

## **Cultural and Leisure Quarter.**

NWLDC Cabinet has approved the purchase of the former health centre site and approved an initial budget for the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a new short stay car park. The purchase of the site is also an opportunity to improve the street scene and public realm in the surrounding area. This includes accessibility to the leisure centre and landscaping along North Street.

Due to range of assets clustered in a relatively small area it was identified that the area could be branded as the Cultural & Leisure Quarter of the town. This would allow increased and joint promotion of all of the assets and provide the town with a new focal point for visitors and tourists. The District Council has appointed architects to advise on and design a scheme of works. The aim of the project is to provide an enhanced public realm which acts as a gateway to the 'Cultural and Leisure Quarter.'

Work is well underway on the project for the provision of an additional 52 car park spaces on the former health centre site. The gates which formed the entrance to the Hood Park car park have been relocated, decorative cladding is being provided for the boundary wall of the Lido, new signage for the Leisure Centre and a piece of public art is being commissioned to form a gateway to the Cultural & Leisure Quarter. The District Council has allocated a further £50,000.00 for the public art project.

It is anticipated that the initial part of the work will be completed in July 2018.

## **Heritage Quarter.**

The Heritage Stakeholder Group has met on a number of occasions and has concentrated its time on the open spaces within the town. It has undertaken an audit of these spaces and developed an action plan for enhancements to Hood Park, the town cemetery and the Loudoun Memorial.



It has also considered the signage around the town to identify where improvements can be made. As a result of this work an audit of the street signage has been commissioned from Leicestershire County Council. The results of that audit are awaited.

The Group has also identified an opportunity to provide better information at the two main District Council car parks on North Street and South Street. Options are being considered.

### **Business Quarter.**

The Business Stakeholder Group has met on a regular basis to consider improvements to the public realm of the town in and around Market Street. A detailed report was considered at its last meeting and an action plan is now being drawn up for implementation.

### **Walking & Cycling.**

The walking and cycling group has concentrated on determining the status of the draft Ashby Cycling Strategy. It is pleased to note that the strategy now forms part of the Local Plan public consultation. Further work is required on considering a walking strategy for the town. We are currently looking at the “Walkers are Welcome” accreditation, which we feel could give us a structure to work to which will assist the project aim of encouraging walking in and around Ashby.

We have had early discussions with the prospects of the town promoting ‘Green Tourism’. A discussion has taken place with Seven Trent Water about the use of re-filling stations in Ashby to reduce the use of plastic bottles.

### **Marketing & Promotion.**

Following the successful launch of the new town brand in November 2017, The Ashby Project has been considering the most effective, and imaginative, ways to create brand awareness, and to encourage the use of it. The creation of ‘Brand Ambassadors’ is an idea to support local businesses, and to extend the reach of the brand.

We approached a local bee farmer, with a great established brand, and discussed his local honey jars carrying the new logo, we agreed to pay the additional cost to cover artwork and print costs. The produce is stocked widely, and for little cost, 3000 jars of honey, displaying the new town brand are now in circulation.

To create some publicity an interview was arranged with ‘Ashby Life’. This gave a platform to the bee farmer to promote his work and gave us an opportunity to explain about how other businesses could get involved as brand ambassadors.

We further arranged publicity for the first shop delivery of the newly branded honey, inviting the Mayor and the Leader of the Town Council. The business baked a celebratory cake with the new town logo in edible icing! Lots of Social Media posts have also created some noise.

We have now been approached by the PC Clinic, Dean and Smedley, Love Ashby and the restaurant, Cocktail and Wine Bar Zamanis with a view to becoming brand ambassadors.

We are now also considering the most effective way of distributing the new Town Guide and discussions are ongoing around wider circulation and the creation of a town “Welcome Pack” for new residents and businesses. We intend to liaise closely with local developers, estate and letting agents.

In addition, the project is keen to measure the success and impact of any marketing. This includes the Digital Boards at Rebound and Swarkestone. Currently, there is no robust way of measuring increase in footfall. The NWLDC are undecided whether to procure Geosense for the town.

The Programme Manager has delivered talks to a number of groups to promote project progress.

### **Town Website.**

The refreshing of the website is almost complete and has now incorporated the community video and corporate video.

An additional film was commissioned by the project, at the suggestion of Councillor Alison Smith MBE, to explain the branding process in more detail.

An outstanding issue is integration of the online booking and payments system for Town Council services. We aim to have the website completed shortly.

In order to gain user feedback on the website changes we have created a survey using 'Survey Monkey'. A simple 10 question survey will help us gauge the success of the changes.

### **Place Marketing.**

As part of a NWLDC service level agreement we are working with Leicestershire Promotions Ltd on a place-marketing strategy for the town. It has agreed to look at progress to date and will make recommendations on where our focus should be. To date we have yet to receive a report or proposals.

### **St. Helen's churchyard project.**

St. Helen's Church is one of the principal landmarks of the town. The churchyard is a major thoroughfare into and out of the town. A public footpath runs either side of the churchyard (defined on the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way in Leicestershire as path O94 and O93). With the expansion of the town and additional housing on Leicester Road the churchyard is increasingly a gateway to the town centre.

At its meeting in June 2015, following a recommendation from Councillor Rushton, the Committee instigated a project to re-order the churchyard. The purpose of the project would be that the churchyard area more adequately provides:

- An appropriate setting for the Grade I listed Parish Church of St. Helen within the Ashby Conservation Area;
- A place of peace and recreation for the local community and visitors;
- An enduring and respectful memorial to the generations of Ashby people buried in the churchyard;
- Support to the heritage project of the PCC to provide an educational setting and visitor attraction befitting the history of the site.

The infrastructure for the up-lighting works is finally complete. An archaeologist was employed to oversee the exhumation of any human remains which were unearthed as a result of the works. The commissioning of the lighting system took place in early March.

Landscaping Plans have been drawn and local landscape gardeners have been issued with the brief. Tenders have been received and a recommendation will be put before the next Programme Board meeting for implementation.

A positive meeting has been held with the County Council to discuss heritage lighting within the churchyard. We are awaiting options from LCC, with associated costs.

### **Civic Award.**

The Town Council Civic Award was first presented in 1979 but lapsed in 2006. The Town Council decided to re-instate the Civic Award in 2011 to recognise those "who have given service of great benefit to the community" and is presented by the Town Council on behalf of the people of Ashby de la Zouch.

Nominations are made by members of the public and the award is made by the Town Council.

The recipient of the 2017 award is Richard Nevin. Richard has lived in Ashby for over 30 years. He has been involved in scouting for many years as Scout Leader and Group Scout Leader of 4<sup>th</sup> Ashby Scout Group. Richard moved on to manage scouting in North West Leicestershire and then Leicestershire and the East Midlands. Richard has also volunteered his time to East Midlands Ambulance Service as Community First Responder. Richard has used these skills to teach CPR and first aid to local schools and charities including Ivanhoe College and Ashby School, Rainbows, Guides and Scouts and the Rotary Clubs.

The Town Council is pleased to be able to present the 2017 Civic Award to Richard at the Civic Dinner in April.

**Previous winners of the award:**

1979	L. H. Matthews.	1995	Mrs S. Homer.
1980	T. Pearson.	1995	J. R. Sherwin.
1981	Miss J. Smedley.	1996	K. Hillier.
1982	J. Staples.	1998	Mrs J. Hawkins.
1982	G. Williams.	1999	Mrs J. Jarman.
1983	B. Gardner.	2001	Mrs R. Burnett.
1984	H. Grice.	2004	J. Shaw.
1985	E. A. Crane.	2005	Mrs H. Chandler.
1987	C. Belfield.	2006	Mrs P. Goldsmith.
1988	Mrs M. R. Redfern.	2011	C. Jones.
1991	Mrs M. A. Hall.	2012	K. Hillier.
1991	P. Abney-Hastings.	2012	Mrs D. Lorriman.
1992	Mrs G. Hammond.	2014	Mrs K. Belfield.
1993	G. Paine.	2015	Lorna Titley.
1994	I. Shaw.	2017	R. Nevin

**Special Awards:**

- Dr A. Russell (Pithiviers).
- Mrs M. J. Rushton.
- Ashby Old People’s Welfare Assoc.
- Ashby Summer Playscheme.
- Mr D. A. Watson.
- Mme Aimee Hannequin.
- Donisthorpe Reunion Band.

**Youth Award:**

- 2017 Joshua Benfield.

**Youth Award.**

The Town Council Youth Award was created in 2016 to recognise the work of a young person in the town. The good work that young people do often goes unrecognised and they sometimes get a “bad press”. The Youth Award is an attempt to redress the balance. The winner of the award for 2017 (and the first winner) is Joshua Benfield.

To quote from his nomination: “.....he has been a reliable and hard-working young leader with the Ashby Churches Holiday Bible Club for several years. Over this time we have seen him grow from initially being an enthusiastic helper with games and activities, to being a competent leader from the front, able to hold the attention of the 40-plus children who attend and support the smooth running of the programme. Joshua is a very caring person and children and adults warm to him. His service in the club is of great value as he helps to create a safe and fun environment for all who come along.

I know that Josh also helps with Rock Solid, a youth club run by Ashby Youth for Christ on Friday evenings, and has shown a very mature and committed attitude to being a young leader there.

Josh continues to demonstrate a real heart to serve and support the people and activities of the town where he lives and not only the young people as I am aware in the past he has volunteered as a helper at the Ashby Food Bank and more recently at the Fair-Trade Shop, Fair2All on Bath Row. He is also an enthusiastic member of the Ashby Musical Theatre Society.

Like so many teenagers, he has had his share of struggles and this award would be a boost to his confidence and sense of value. He is a special young man and it would be great to recognise him in this way.”

The Town Council agreed that Joshua is a very worthy winner of the Youth Award.

### **Special Award.**

The Town Council was disappointed to learn that the Donsithorpe Reunion Band had decided to retire from its annual support for the Ashby Remembrance Day Parade. However, in recognition of its 23 years unstinting service to the parade the Town Council wished to mark the occasion with the presentation of a Special Award to the band.

A certificate will be presented to both the winner of the Youth Award and the Special Award at the Annual Town Meeting in May.

### **Councillor Nick Rushton.**

**Chairman of the Finance, Tourism & Administration Committee.**

**March 2018.**



**The Mayor leads the tractors onto the Bath Grounds at Jim’s Tractor Run & Family Fun Day.**

## **PARKS & CEMETERY COMMITTEE.**

The committee has responsibility for all matters relating to all of the land and buildings owned or leased or managed by the Town Council (other than Legion House), including: the Bath Grounds, Hood Park, Western Park and associated buildings, Willesley and Westfields Recreation Grounds, the War Memorials on Market Street, in St.Helen's Churchyard and in Blackfordby, the Loudoun Memorial on Bath Street; the allotment gardens and the Town cemetery; and, the 'closed' churchyards at St. Helen's Church and Holy Trinity Church.

The Committee considered a wide range of topics throughout the year:

### **Litter-picking.**

The Committee has received regular reports from the litter-picking champion, Robert Gough, on his efforts around the parish to keep it free from litter and fly-tipping.

### **The Bath Grounds.**

A good deal of the Committee's time and energy during the last year has, once again, been taken up by issues surrounding the Bath Grounds.

The Committee was pleased to receive regular written reports from the 'Friends of the Bath Grounds' on suggestions for changes to the park. The Committee noted the completion of the work around the footpath off Prior Park Road: 'The Castle View Wildlife Walk'. The improvements have been very well received by all those who use the Bath Grounds.

The Committee also noted that the work to eradicate the Japanese Knotweed which is present in two small sections of the park was on-going.

The Committee was disturbed to hear of some isolated incidents of anti-social on the Royal Hotel public car park which abuts the Bath Grounds. A multi-agency approach with the local police, the District Council, the owners of the Royal Hotel and the Friends of the Bath Grounds has made some real progress in addressing this issue.

### **Range Road Depot.**

The Committee has indicated its wish to continue with the improvements to Range Road Depot to enhance operational efficiency and security. These changes will be taken forward in the new financial year.

### **Former Grammar School Playing Field.**

The Committee was pleased to note the completion (in November 2017) of the purchase by the Town Council from Leicestershire County Council of the former grammar school playing field off Prior Park Road. The acquisition of this important part of the green corridor between Ashby Castle and the Bath Grounds will preserve this land as open space for future generations.

The Committee approved the sale of a small parcel of land at North Close, Blackfordby for use as affordable housing. The proceeds of the sale of this land will be re-invested into the village.

The Town Council was invited to adopt some land, which included two large balancing ponds, from the developers of the land off Butt Lane in Blackfordby. Although the potential commuted sum on offer was attractive it was the view of the Committee that there was a real risk of burdening the local taxpayer with a potentially large liability. On balance, therefore, the Committee was unable to accept the offer to adopt the land.

The Committee was pleased to be able to approve the lighting of the Loudoun Memorial in purple to mark World Polio Day on 24<sup>th</sup> October, World Prematurity Day on 17<sup>th</sup> November and the award of Purple Flag status over the weekend of 25/26<sup>th</sup> November.

The Committee was dismayed to learn that a number of trees which had been planted on Hood Park in February 2015 to continue the avenue of trees from the leisure centre to the former biscuit factory site had been damaged in a mindless act of vandalism. Replacement trees have now been planted with the welcome help of a 50% grant from the National Forest Company. It is hoped that we do not see a repeat of such foolishness.

The Committee was pleased to be able to approve the construction of a new footpath to join up the path from the new housing development on the former soap factory site to the path in Hood Park notwithstanding that the formal adoption process of the bridge over the Gilwiskaw Brook and adjacent land has yet to be completed.

The Committee was also pleased to be able to approve the construction of a multi-use games area on the Westfields Recreation Ground for the benefit of local residents. The project is being led by the Friends of Westfields who have done a wonderful job in raising funds and generating local support. The Town Council has recently been successful in a funding bid to SUEZ Communities Trust for £27,000 towards the project.

**Councillor Roger Bayliss.**  
**Chairman of the Parks & Cemetery Committee.**  
**March 2018.**



**The Mayor (left) and the Leader of the Town Council (right) receive the Local Council Award Scheme Quality Gold Award from the Chairman of the Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils, Councillor Guy Jackson (centre).**

## **LICENSING COMMITTEE.**

The purpose of the Committee is to consider, and comment upon, licensing applications which impact upon the town centre and the implications of the extension of the night time economy. It also considers matters to do with street trading and supports the local 'Pub Watch' scheme.

The Committee was delighted to learn that the application for 'Purple Flag' Scheme Accreditation for Ashby de la Zouch town centre by NWLDC had been successful following the assessors visit in August 2017. The assessors were very impressed by what they observed during their visit and this is testament to all of the hard work put in by those who took the lead in the application process.

The Committee noted the three-month suspension of its trading licence of Express Chicken & Pizza on Market Street due to continued breaches of its licence conditions. The Committee was pleased to comment upon the proposed changes to the NWLDC Street Trading Policy document.

The Committee, once again, noted the welcome presence of a town centre medical provision over the Christmas and New Year period. The Committee continued to comment upon street trading applications within the town.

The Committee now receives regular reports from the Deputy Town Clerk on crimes which have been reported within the town centre. The Committee is also pleased to be a member of the CCTV User Group and the Ashby Pub Watch Scheme.

**Councillor Mary Tuckey.**  
**Chairman of the Licensing Committee.**  
**March 2018.**

## **PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.**

The purpose of the Committee is to ensure that the future of Ashby, in regard to its development, is one that meets both with the town's aspirations of growth and sustainability and with the views and needs of the residents. The Committee has considered, and commented upon, more than 170 planning applications during the year.

The Committee remains concerned about the scale and location of developments in and around the town. The loss of green space around the town, the impact on the infrastructure of the town (particularly schools and health), increasing traffic congestion and the unsustainability of the proposed developments has caused the Committee to raise objections to the applications with the Local Planning Authority.

In particular, the Committee has objected to the development up to 30 dwellings on land off Hepworth Road, Woodville which abuts the village of Blackfordby; more than 70 dwellings on land off Butt Lane, Blackfordby by Davidson's Homes; the development of the northern car park of the Royal Hotel, Ashby to provide office accommodation and 28 residential apartments; the conversion of the former Ashby & District Cottage Hospital on car parking and highways issues; and, the development of 13 dwellings on Bullen's Field which is designated local green space.

The Committee was also minded to support local residents in opposing the siting of an emergency electricity generating facility off Willesley Lane in Ashby in an area of open green space.

The Committee has been concerned to note that the Town Council has not yet been consulted on the content of the long-awaited Money Hill Master Plan despite a number of workshops



attended by a number of stakeholders which were held in autumn of 2016. The Committee will continue to press the Local Planning Authority on this matter.

The Committee was disturbed to hear from local residents about the closure of the footpath between Philip Bent Way and Woodside. The Committee resolved to write to the District Council to express its support for the re-opening of the footpath to enable safe access between the two estates especially for children attending Hilltop Primary School. The District Council was invited to consider the land ownership issues and any planning considerations which may apply. At the time of writing this report matters are still unresolved.

### **Neighbourhood Plan.**

The Committee has received regular reports on the progress towards the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for the town. Any such plan would have to be taken into consideration in future planning applications for the town.

The Plan has been approved for submission for examination and, at the time of writing, the results of the deliberations of the examiner are awaited.

The Committee has also received regular updates on the North West Leicestershire Local Plan which impacts both upon the Neighbourhood Plan and planning applications within the parish. It noted that the Local Plan has now been adopted.

The Committee has indicated its wish to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan for the village of Blackfordby. A launch event was held in the village in early April 2017. The designated status has been approved and a number of meetings held at the village hall over the winter to progress the plan.

### **Transportation matters.**

The Committee has been kept informed of temporary traffic regulation orders affecting the parish, temporary footpath closures, bus stop proposals, no waiting orders, changes to speed limits and the implementation of speed reduction features. It has also made suggestions for street naming on new housing developments.

The Committee is being kept informed with regular reports on the improvement work which has begun at the Flagstaff Roundabout at junction 13 of the A42.

The Committee receives regular reports regarding the problems with parking in the town. In particular concerns were raised with the Committee regarding car parking on The Green and on Mill Bank. It is hoped that the additional parking capacity which will be created on the North Street site will help to alleviate some of these problems.

The Committee was also concerned to hear about a proposed residents' car parking scheme on Lower Church Street and South Street which would move the start of the one-way system to the junction with Prior Park Road. The Committee expressed its concerns regarding the withdrawal of the MacPherson Service 1/2/3 (the town centre loop) and it has been working with the County Council to try and find a replacement service.

The Committee also awaits with interest any developments regarding the proposals for a high-speed rail link (HS2) which will follow the route of the M42/A42 through the parish.

### **Councillor Geraint Jones.**

**Chairman of the Planning & Transportation Committee.**

**March 2018.**

## **EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE.**

The purpose of the Committee is to oversee the Town Council's events and entertainment programme; to approve any ad hoc events which are planned to take place in the town; to consider ideas and requests for new events for inclusion within the programme; and to encourage new and innovative ideas for events and entertainment which will improve social inclusion and well-being.

### **Jim's Tractor Run and Family Fun Day.**

The seventh of Jim's vintage tractor runs took place at the end of July. Hundreds of people witnessed the tractors (and other vintage vehicles) parade through the centre of town, Blackfordby and finish on the Bath Grounds. Here the vehicles were put on show and families were able to enjoy rides, stalls and music as part of the day. The fun dog show was very well attended.

### **Fake Festival.**

The sixth Ashby Fake Festival took place in June and has now become firmly established on the concert calendar in the Midlands. Around two thousand people enjoyed music from local bands in the afternoon and then the headline tribute acts Oasis, Guns 'n' Roses and Greenday in the evening.

For 2018 the Fake Festival is planned for Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June with no less than six tribute bands on offer: Pink, The Killers, Blondie, David Bowie, the Foo Fighters and the Rolling Stones.

### **Ashby Food & Drink Festival.**

The fifth Ashby Food & Drink Festival took place on the Bath Grounds over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend at the end of May. The weather was kind to us this year and as a result hundreds of people were able to sample the wide range of food and drinks which were on offer or simply enjoy the entertainment which was provided as a back drop to the event.

### **Commonwealth Day.**

For the fourth time in its history the Town Council marked Commonwealth Day on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018 with a flag raising ceremony at the War Memorial. The Mayor, Leader of the Town Council and Town Councillors were joined by the Revd. Mary Gregory and a number of children from Hill Top Primary School to mark the occasion.

### **Christmas Lighting.**

Once again in 2017 the Town Council made a provision of more than £10,000 to put towards Christmas Festive Lighting scheme. A new format was implemented this year following some negative feedback on the previous year's lights. A working party from the Committee had considered options for a new lights scheme for recommendation for approval to the Committee and a three-year contract was entered into. Although the changes proved controversial in some quarters in general terms the light scheme was well received. Nevertheless, there will be some changes in 2018 following the feedback received.

The Town Council has also continued with its responsibility for the main tree and lights on Market Street and has also included a tree and lights adjacent to the Youth Club building on Main Street in Blackfordby.

### **Christmas Market & Fair.**

The Town Council organised the Christmas Market & Fair, and associated entertainment, on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2017. Additionally, the market also opened for business on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. This was the second time that the fair was run over the weekend rather than just the Saturday and the link with the Santa Fun Run on the same day seemed to work very well.

For the first time the whole of Market Street and Brook Street was closed for the day. Food Gusto provided a food and drink market and a programme of entertainment kept the crowds enthralled throughout the day. A One Direction boy band tribute act closed the event with the usual snow cannon. The event was extremely well attended and it has become a firm favourite in the calendar each year.

### **Santa Fun Run.**

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2017 saw the town's third Santa Run Fun set off from the Bath Grounds. More than 1,400 Santas ran or walked the 3km course around the town. Ashby Castle Rotary Club was delighted to announce that thanks to the amazing support from all of those who took part it raised the fantastic sum of has raised £11644.36 for charity.

There is a big "thank you" to all who took part, sponsored and offered time and services to help make this event the huge success that it has become for both our town and community and the local charities that you help support each year.

The chosen charities were Hospice Hope and Staunton Harold Sailability Trust each receiving £2,800.00 and Rainbows Children's' Hospice and Wishes 4 Kids each receiving £1,400.00. The remaining monies will be distributed to other charities supported by Rotary. This is a fantastic result and we look forward to planning ahead for 2018.

### **Armistice Day Act of Remembrance Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November and Remembrance Day Parade Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November.**

The Remembrance Day Parade gets larger each year and it is estimated that around 2,500 people attended the wreath laying ceremony at the war memorial. The parade now has a new starting point at Ivanhoe College and a new route as a result. A lot of unseen work goes into preparing for, and delivering, this occasion. The Town Council will continue to organise and support this important event in the future.

The Armistice Day Act of Remembrance was attended by around 400 people and it continues to grow each year. Closing Market Street to traffic around the War Memorial has helped to make the event safer, particularly for the young children who now attend.

### **Ashby FABulous event.**

The Committee noted the excellent work of the volunteers in putting on such a fantastic event for the town on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2017. This is a real landmark event for the town and something unique in this area. It is hoped that volunteers will come forward for 2018 to keep the event alive.

### **Ashby 20 Road Race.**

The Ashby 20 Road Race for 2018 was, unfortunately, cancelled due to snow and ice over the weekend of the race. Although this was very disappointing for all concerned it was, by common assent, the right decision by the organisers. It would have been very dangerous for runners, spectators and stewards in the appalling conditions.

## **Vintage Vehicle Festival.**

The organisers of a vintage vehicle festival made a presentation to the Committee regarding the possibility of a festival being held in the centre of the town on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July. This took place for the first time in the town. The town was packed for the event. We look forward to a bigger and better event in 2018.

## **Lt. Col.Philip Bent VC DSO.**

1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Lt. Col. Philip Pent VC DSO who was killed at the Battle of Polygon Wood during the First World War. A small but moving event was held at the War Memorial on Brook Street in the presence of Philip Bent's great nephew and great-great nephew who unveiled a plaque in his memory.

## **Councillor Gill Hout.**

**Chairman of the Events & Entertainment Committee.  
March 2018.**



**The Mayor at the Ashby Festival of Transport, Market Street July 2017.**