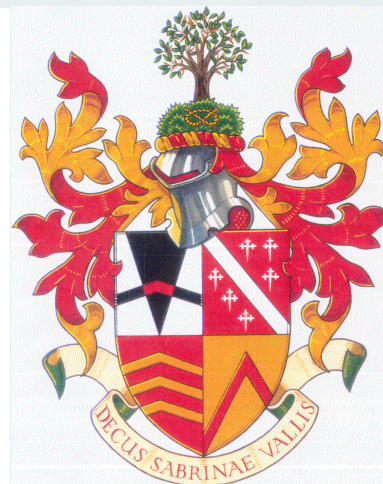


Thornbury Town Council—
Working to develop and promote the
interests of our community.



Thornbury Town Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022



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Cllr Jayne Stansfield, Mayor of Thornbury and Chair of Thornbury Town Council

A WORD FROM THE MAYOR

When I wrote my report a year ago, I thought that 2020 was a one-off, but 2021 followed in much the same way! At the start of the year council meetings were online, returning to face-to-face when the emergency legislation expired, meaning we initially had to desert the Town Hall and hold council meetings at the Leisure Centre in order to meet all of the social distancing requirements.

Just like last year there was no carnival, no Christmas lights switch on event and no Remembrance parade. However, this year there was a Remembrance service held at St Mary's which is one step back to normality. I would like to thank St Mary's church for enabling this to happen.

Despite the continued disruption to our lives many organisations have continued to provide services and support to Thornbury residents. I am pleased to be able to say that the Town Council has played its part by giving grants to many of these valuable services, including Krunch,

Phase, Jigsaw, Thornbury Christmas Lights Association, Thornbury in Bloom and more.

I am proud of this council for taking Climate Change seriously. The Town Council declared a climate emergency, in line with South Gloucestershire and set up a Climate Change Advisory group to look at the council's work and identify possible actions the council could take to help the town move towards net-zero.

Yet again our staff have ensured that all the Town Council's responsibilities have been met. All our properties and open spaces are well-maintained, including our play areas. Work to update the Chantry Road play area to provide accessible play equipment was undertaken, with plans afoot for updating the Eastland play area and the Skate Park.

I would like to finish by thanking all our office and outdoor staff for the work they have done throughout the year. Thank you!

"Thank you to all our office and outdoor staff for all their hard work throughout the year."



REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

It was my privilege to be elected as Chair of the Open Spaces Committee in early 2022, and my thanks go to the previous Chair, Councillor Clive Parkinson, for all his hard work in leading the Committee. Again, it has been a challenging year as COVID continued to have an impact on some of the Committee's planned projects. I would like to thank our outdoor team for their continued professionalism and dedication during this difficult year. Our green spaces and play areas remained open, well maintained and safe, thanks to their efforts.

The Committee has continued to

support many activities and open spaces around the town including St Mary's closed churchyard, Thornbury Cemetery (including new gates), Heritage Open Days in September 2021, Thornbury Town Football Club facilities at the Mundy Playing Fields, safety checks and maintenance of our five play areas in the town, as well as providing funds and support to our volunteer Tree Warden who has planted many more trees around the town this year.

Continued...



Councillors celebrate the opening of the newly installed Chantry Road play area.

Report of the Chairman of the Open Spaces Committee continued...

As part of the Town Council's rolling replacement programme of all of its play areas, the Committee has overseen the redevelopment of the Chantry Road Play Area which should be finished by late spring. The Committee continues to oversee the surveying and works to all trees on Town Council land, which has been especially important with us experiencing many more storms this year. The Committee also continues to oversee the Town Council's contract with South Gloucestershire Council for the provision of dog waste bin emptying, grass cutting and maintenance of areas planted with perennial flowers.

Despite COVID, the Committee was able to provide a hanging basket scheme, albeit a slightly reduced scheme in light of COVID restrictions. It also worked with the Tree Warden and many local volunteers to oversee the installation of a new hedge on Oakleaze Green. This will provide a natural barrier to unwanted vehicle access, but also provide a haven for wildlife and help towards our climate change goals. The Committee, and the Council as a whole, remains committed to many more initiatives to help tackle climate change. For instance, the Committee has agreed the funding for the installation of a water fountain at the Mundy Playing Fields which will contribute towards reducing the use of plastic bottles.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Committee members for their hard work and commitment to making Thornbury's many open spaces enjoyable places to be.

Councillor Guy Rawlinson

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE

Over the past year, Covid 19 has continued to overshadow staff activities and, although all aspects of managing and running the Council's services have been affected, staff have worked hard to ensure that all facilities and equipment have been maintained and the strict government requirements were met.

There have been several staff changes and both the Clerk and her deputy have been busy with recruitment and induction.

Unfortunately, one of these changes meant we had to say goodbye to our Town Clerk. Louise made many improvements to the Town Council during her employment, including many new health and safety procedures. We wish her and the other members of staff who have left us, all the very best for the future. We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Town Clerk, who joined the team in March.

The staff appraisal process continues and the staffing committee will be considering the outcomes of these at future meetings.

Staff have received training, both to aid them in their jobs and to ensure our legal duty of care is followed, including, safe use of pesticides, topple testing and legionella awareness.

The training requirements continue to reflect the audit conducted on a range of Council duties during the year.

Finally, I would like to thank all the staff for their commitment to the work they do and, in the face of significant challenges, continue to ensure excellent relations with members of the public.

Councillor Guy Rawlinson

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Last year's review of Council properties came to fruition this year with a structured maintenance and repair plan of action that was both properly budgeted and properly managed. A scheduled repair always provides better value than emergency work and we are confident that the rolling programme we have put into place will serve Council well into the future.

Our important grant programme had to respond to the Covid impact with some grants being put back from the previous year and others being revised to meet revised circumstances. Grants are important to both groups in the town and to Council and we are pleased to have supported so many groups through unprecedented times.

Our planned review of procedures, whilst not exciting is key to good practice in the modern world and over 20 key procedures have been either reviewed or introduced in the past year and this will continue on a rolling project.

Finally, a very good report following our internal audit was well received by the committee and reflects very well on our staff who have ensured Council finances are run to a high standard. We give our sincere thanks to them all.

Councillor Chris Davies

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING AND TOWN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

One of the Committee's main tasks is to comment on the planning applications that are to be determined by SGC. Since the last Annual report, 125 applications have been considered, although only 78 were eventually determined by the Planning Authority, 57 of which were in line with the Town Council's views. The total number of applications has dropped over the last 5 years but the percentage of those determined in line with the Town Council's views has also dropped from 80% to 73%.

The majority of applications are for relatively small extensions and alterations to buildings. However, the Committee has also commented in detail on several large new development sites. The Town Council was represented at the South Glos Strategic Sites Development Committee meeting when the Reserved Matters application for Cleve Park was determined. Particular objections were in relation to building heights and the loss of the wildlife corridor. Town Council was also represented at the application for outline consent on Land West of Park Farm, Butt Lane where it raised several objections. That application is yet to be determined on Appeal.

The Town Planning Committee has again supported the Neighbourhood Plan group while the final stages of the process proceeded, in order that the plan could go to referendum on March 31st 2022. The continued commitment to the work by local people who sit on the steering group is to be commended and all members are thanked for their work.

The High Street regeneration project instigated by SGC has been a significant item for the committee, with the SGC officers leading the project providing information through presentations on several occasions. The Council has submitted many questions to project officers, some responses have been received but some are still outstanding.

The Committee leads for the Council at the Town Centre Partnership. The agendas have been dominated by issues about the High Street and to a lesser extent Rock Street.

The Committee has responded to several consultations which are relevant to Thornbury, including WECA's A38 Improvement Plan (Bus & Cycleways plans); SGC's Greener Spaces Strategy; Oldbury-on-Severn's Neighbourhood Plan, SGC's Phase 2 Local Plan and several SGC consultations on the High St, including five Traffic Regulation Orders.

I d like to thank Council Officers and my fellow councillors on the Committee for the time they spend and the diligence they show when undertaking the task.

Councillor Maggie Tyrrell

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Year	Total Number of Applications Considered by Town Council	Total Number of Applications determined by South Gloucestershire Council	Total Number of Applications determined in line with Town Council's Comments	%
2015-16	160	136	106	86.8
2016-17	160	147	119	85.6
2017-18	167	122	98	80.3
2018-19	135	108	90	83.3
2019-20	129	103	79	81.4
2020-21	127	COVID	COVID	75.0
2021-22	125	78	57	73.0

As of 22.03.22

THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS

CASTLE SCHOOL FRIENDS

Castle School Friends is a group of parents and teachers who support our local secondary school by a variety of means such as fundraising events for equipment the school couldn't otherwise provide, social activities and general improvement of the school site by regular gardening and DIY days.

This year we have received a grant from Thornbury Town Council for a programme for the year 7 students called Bookbuzz. This programme was specifically requested by the English Department to support literacy for this group of students who have been disadvantaged in their schooling due to the disruption caused by the Covid pandemic.

Bookbuzz is an inclusive programme which will enable all the students to receive a book which they can take home and keep, with the aim to encourage reading for pleasure for all.

On behalf of Castle School Friends, I would like to say a sincere thank you for the grant which will help 240 children this year.



“Thank you, Thornbury Town Council.”

THE WILLOW TREE



Through our 18 volunteer we provide free, confidential and unbiased listening and support service for women and girls (and their partners) in distress following unplanned pregnancy, after abortion and all types of baby loss.

The grant provided by Thornbury Town Council will be used to refresh our marketing material, so as we emerge from the pandemic, those in distress and need of support in our area are aware of how to access our services.

We are also using the funding awarded to continue our association and membership with other counselling organisations enabling us to access resources and maintain the quality of services we provide to our clients.

At a time when our usual fundraising activities have been restricted by COVID-19 your support has been invaluable, enabling our organisation to continue to support the mental health and wellbeing of our local community.

Thank you, Thornbury Town Council!

GRANTS

Small Business Grants

GRANT AID	£
Thornbury Duke of Edinburgh	835.00
The Willow Tree Centre	350.00
Castle School Friends	810.00
Sight Support—West of England	500.00
Friends of Marlwood School	500.00
Phase CIC	950.00
Jigsaw Thornbury	1000.00
Thornbury Community Composting	1000.00
AAG	362.00
TOTAL AWARDED	6307.00

Revenue Grants

GRANT AID	£
Phase CIC	2000.00
Jigsaw	4000.00
Thornbury Volunteer Centre	3340.00
Thornbury Christmas Lights Assoc.	1356.70
Over 60's Tea Room	4640.00
Thornbury Arts Festival	2500.00
Krunch South West	1800.00
Thornbury Radio	3898.00
Thornbury In Bloom	1500.00
Thornbury & District Heritage Trust	5000.00
Citizens Advice	5900.00
Thornbury & District Community Assoc.	3000.00
TOTAL AWARDED	38934.00



THE OVER 60'S TEA ROOM

The Over 60's Tea Room has been running for over 27 years.

Due to Covid we were very disappointed not to be able to open for many months last year, but we used the time we were closed to redecorate so we were able to welcome back our visitors in June.

We were unsure whether people would feel happy to come out again but we were very pleased to see many of our regulars return and welcome new visitors.

We have also had a lot of new volunteers join us, which is lovely.

We recently asked our visitors for their comments about the Tea Room, they included 'Wonderful, would be lost without it', 'Great to make friends', 'A great meeting place' and 'It makes our day, stops loneliness'.

Without the grant the Town Council awards us to reduce our rent costs, we would not be able to open and provide this place for our local residents and visitors to meet.

"Without the grant the Town Council award us, we would not be able to open."



THORNBURY COMMUNITY COMPOSTING

Thornbury Community Composting volunteers always very much appreciate the grant given to them by the Town Council.

This year the grant money is going towards the purchase of a replacement storage container as the one we are using currently has reached the end of its life. Despite being patched up, the roof has been leaking badly and there are holes appearing at the base. Another temporary inside repair with tarpaulin has got us through the first part of this winter, but a longer term solution is now needed.

The volunteers are in the process of investigating the purchase of a

refurbished container and hardcore for it to stand on.

We are a small volunteer team and we work well together. We are happy to be continuing to provide this facility for Thornbury and surrounds and in a small way contribute to the important issue of how to recycle waste in our local area.

We are very appreciated by the residents who are now coming from all over South Gloucestershire.

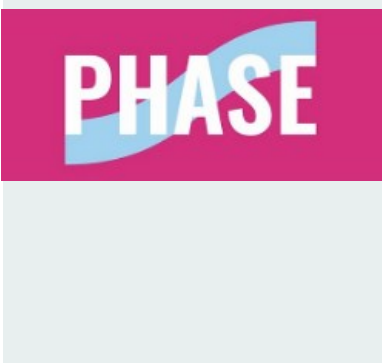
Many thanks from the volunteers and users of the site for Thornbury Town Council support.

PHASE

Phase have been the very grateful recipients of two Thornbury Town Council grants, £950 was awarded to us for the continuation and development of our mentoring service and £2000 was awarded as a revenue grant - to be used to help fund a new job role within PHASE.

This grant money ensures that we can confidently continue our mentoring support programme and provide resources and small essential items during the rest of the year.

The Operations Manager oversees our services as well as looking for and applying for funding that will assist to keep these services running, ensuring Phase complies with all statutory regulations and guidelines required for the running of its services and also planning for the future to ensure PHASE can continue.



THE VOLUNTEER CENTRE

It has been another challenging year but the Volunteer Centre has successfully managed volunteers and opportunities whilst the office has been opening and shutting, depending on Government guidelines.

We have seen many notable successes though and this is what makes our work so worthwhile.

When Mick retired from his job, he started looking for other things to do. Through us, he started working at the Donkey Sanctuary. He works every day for a couple of hours in the morning which suits him as he can be home by 9.30am with rest of the day free. Mick says “I find that volunteering is very rewarding, especially when working with the donkeys. The atmosphere is friendly, the donkeys are affectionate, everyone is made very welcome and I feel my time there is valued.”

The social value of volunteers and their economic benefits to a community are immeasurable and the support of Thornbury Town Council ensures that this value is recognised and appreciated.



“The social value of volunteers and their economic benefits to a community are immeasurable and the support of Thornbury Town Council ensures that this value is recognised and appreciated.”

THORNBURY AND DISTRICT MUSEUM

The museum remained closed to visitors during 2021 due to Covid however, a small team of Volunteers have been busy working behind the scenes, with a view to opening in April 2022.

We are meeting the challenges of re-opening for visitors, while Covid is still a concern, by rearranging our reception and installing a protective screen. Protecting both visitors and volunteers from infection is a high priority, alongside making Thornbury's popular museum available again.

These volunteers have been answering numerous enquiries, providing all sorts of information for local schools and organisations, gathering additional digital records, providing guided walks when requested, supplying and selling books on request and providing most museum services short of opening.

This also fulfils the requirements of our main grant giving bodies to whom we remain immensely grateful, Thornbury Town Council and South Gloucestershire Council.



SIGHT SUPPORT WEST OF ENGLAND



The support from Thornbury Town Council will enable us to hold a monthly community hub at Thornbury Library where we are able to provide one-to-one, in person support to blind and partially sighted people living in Thornbury. We are extremely grateful for the support of Thornbury Town Council



THORNBURY BEAT TEAM



Clive Summerill
Neighbourhood Inspector



Natalie Jones
Neighbourhood Constable



Justyna Domalewska
PCSO



Claire Leakey
Neighbourhood Sergeant



Marc Maddox
Neighbourhood Constable



Sheryl Drewitt
PCSO

The Neighbourhood Policing Team are based in their new office at the back of the Town Hall.

Residents should still report crime through either the 101 or 999 telephone service as well as our website—

www.avonandsomerset.police.uk



THORNBURY BEAT TEAM REPORT

Over the last year the Thornbury Beat Team have continued to work in partnership with the anti-social behaviour team at South Gloucestershire Council, housing associations, local schools and local authorities to help tackle a range of different issues within the community.

During Covid, we had to suspend our community face to face beat surgeries but are planning on getting them reinstated ASAP—they will be advertised through the Avon and Somerset Police website. We are also involved with the South Glos Council Community Engagement Forum (CEF) meetings that are held every 3 to 4 months. At these meetings, the public can raise any issues that are having an impact in their community.

Another big part of our job is to be on high visibility patrol, targeting areas of concern. Covid 19 has had an impact on normal policing over the last couple of years but we are slowly getting back to normal in a more positive way. Thornbury continues to be a relatively quiet, safe town and crime figures are low.

Positive good news stories:

Police received several theft from motor vehicle reports on the Park Farm estate. After intensive door to door enquires and viewing camera doorbell footage, 3 suspects were identified and linked to possible shop lifting offences. These offences are currently being investigated.

Several Acceptable Behaviour Contracts have been issued to local young people regarding their anti-social behaviour in and around Thornbury. We are also looking at extending another 2 contracts due to recent breaches.

We are waiting for CPS (Crown Prosecution service) to make a charging decision for a local drug dealer after they were stopped, searched and found in possession of a quantity of drugs.

A vehicle that was reported stolen has since been found and recovered for the owner. The suspect has been identified and is currently under investigation.

A local drink driver has been dealt with and charged to Court.

We are dealing with a local young male that was stopped on the motorway after taking his parent's vehicle without consent, driving without a licence and other motoring offences.

Intelligence gathering is a key part when building evidence to proactively deal with issues. We encourage the public to give Police information via any means of contact. If they wish to remain anonymous, they can use Crimestoppers by calling 0800 555 111 or report online at crimestoppers-uk.org.

PC Natalie Jones has been working with a local school regarding a personal safety campaign. The school students designed a poster and were given a personal letter of thanks from the Chief Constable Sarah Crew. Hopefully this poster will be used locally to promote safety apps which are Police approved and delivered to other local schools, youth clubs, Neighbourhood Watches and many other public venues.

The local Police team are always happy to attend any clubs and associations within the Thornbury area to give talks on any type of crime prevention or if they just want to catch up on policing in general. You can get in touch with us through our website www.avonandsomerset.police.uk by simply typing in your post code or phoning on **101**.