

Annual Report

2019/2020



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

View from the Chair



Thornbury is a thriving town with a wonderful community spirit and a lovely place to live and so I was honoured and delighted to be elected as Mayor of Thornbury and Chair of the Town Council last year. I have had a very enjoyable term serving the community and would like to take this opportunity to thank the Town Clerk, Council Staff and other Councillors for all their support.

The Town Council has worked hard to improve and support many different projects in Thornbury this year, we have upgraded the play area in Osprey park and have included accessible play equipment which has proved popular with the younger members of the community. The skatepark has also benefitted from the support of the Town Council with a grant towards the installation of a 'hub' made from shipping containers. The hub, once complete, will serve as a base for refreshments, shelter and support for the young people using the skatepark. Thornbury Football Club have been able to rise through the leagues after the Town Council gave permission to add fencing and a stand to their first team pitch and, therefore meet the criteria, on the Mundy Playing Fields.

Thornbury in Bloom did exceptionally well again and achieved a Gold Award and trophy for the 'Best of Best' in the South West. I would like to congratulate and thank all the people involved in making the town look so beautiful with floral displays, hanging baskets, trees and butterfly banks. Thanks must also go to the Council Outdoor Team who got up early most mornings during the summer to ensure the hanging baskets were watered and looking fresh.

I would also like to thank all the volunteers who organised another very successful carnival. I was lucky enough, as Mayor, to open the event and we were blessed with good weather. People flocked to the Mundy Playing Fields to be entertained, to wander around the stalls and enjoy something to eat or drink.

I also attended many functions as Mayor over the year, which included the Remembrance Day Parade and Service and the Annual Military Service of Remembrance, the Volunteer and Lions Club Christmas Lunches, Fairtrade Fortnight, the launch of Climate Action Thornbury and Surrounding Areas (CATS), the Rotary Club's Swimathon, TMTG and TMTG Juniors productions, Thornbury Museum new exhibitions to name but a few. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many enthusiastic people who gave up their time to enhance the lives of so many of our residents.

A number of engagements were cancelled in April due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I'd like to reassure you that Councillors continue to represent residents from home, Council is still functioning and many staff are still out working where it is not possible to work from home. Thank you to everyone staying at home and a huge THANK YOU to our key workers, nurses, doctors, cleaners, porters, and shop assistants who are working tirelessly to ensure our hospitals, schools and supermarkets stay open and for those who have lost loved ones, I send my condolences.

Finally, I would like to say that it has been a great privilege and my pleasure to serve you as the Mayor of Thornbury.

Cllr Angela Symonds, Mayor of Thornbury and Chair of Thornbury Town Council

Report of the Chair of the Town Development Committee

The Town Development Committee has the opportunity to comment on the planning decision of South Gloucestershire Council but cannot determine the application. During the year a total of 129 planning applications were considered by the Committee and detailed comments were made to the planning authority in each case. 80.4% of applications determined were in line with this Council's comments. Members of the Committee have also continued active involvement in the Thornbury Town Centre Partnership. The St Mary's Centre regularly report on interest in the empty shops from retailers and this year has seen the Centre almost completely full with very few vacancies remaining.

The Committee has noted or responded to a number of consultations including a permit scheme for road works and street works and the WECA local cycling and walking strategy.

The council has continued to be a key partner in the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Thornbury which has involved significant work and community engagement in order to develop a plan for the future of Thornbury. The plan has recently been out for consultation and the steering group made up of members of the local community and Town Councillors are looking through the feedback to see if any changes should be made. Issues which residents raised which can't be tackled through the Neighbourhood Plan will be considered by the Town Council as to how they will lead or coordinate an alternative response.

Report of the Chair of the Town Development Committee Cont'd... This has been a busy year with consultations on major developments taking a lot of Councillors time and energy and I'd like to thank those Members for all their work this year. The Council has commented on or represented the Town appeals and enquiries. The Town Council's position remains to oppose further building outside the development boundary defined in the Core Strategy until such time as a new strategy can be developed to ensure the infrastructure to support new housing is in place.

Thank you also to the staff who have helped to support the committee, ensuring councillors have all the information necessary and for responding to the numerous consultations. I would also like to thank Adrian Savery, representing the Chamber of Commerce, who sat on the Committee this year for the time he has given. It's been a very busy year and it appears that the next one will be as well.

Cllr Maggie Tyrrell, Chair of the Town Development Committee



Report of the Chairman of the Finance and Policy Committee



Although it may not be the most exciting sounding Committee, the Council's Finance and Policy Committee oversees the Council's grant policy, which has a significant impact for the Thornbury Community. Small grants awards totalled £6,000 with 11 groups benefitting from this support this year. Larger revenue grants for 2020/2021 were agreed as part of the budget setting process with a further 11 local organisations benefitting from £33,108 of support from the Town Council.

During the year the Committee responds to a number of consultations on behalf of Thornbury and members of the Committee attend a wide range of meetings representing the people of Thornbury

The Committee has liaised with the Police and welcomed their attendance at meetings and the opportunity to discuss issues as they arise. The Council has now had a meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner where the Council lobbied for a continued increase in patrols and resources for Thornbury.

The Council is delighted to report that it's contract to provide two nights of Youth Services in Thornbury for two years has started this year with Krunch UK. The Committee received an update from the lead youth worker, and a number of Krunch attendees after the first six months of the new contract. The young people were particularly pleasing to hear from, as they told the Committee what they valued about the service and activities they had carried out such as weekly 'cooking' lessons. During the lockdown period the Council has continued to fund Krunch to offer vital support to young people including on line engagement, telephone and socially distanced support to those that need it.

The Committee has overseen management and maintenance of the Council's land and property and planned some necessary works for the next few years. The Council has also made significant cost savings to contracts this year with many service contracts being reviewed and improved. We have also changed providers of our energy supplies to more environmentally friendly options reflecting our emerging strategy to help tackle Climate change.

Some investments the Committee chose to make over the last few years have proved invaluable in enabling the Council to continue to function during the awful coronavirus situation. Staff radios have enabled communication to continue across all sites which has been critical during this time. The review of our IT provision and telephone system has also enabled homeworking to be carried out and critical back office functions to continue to allow some of our frontline work such as the running of the cemetery to continue.

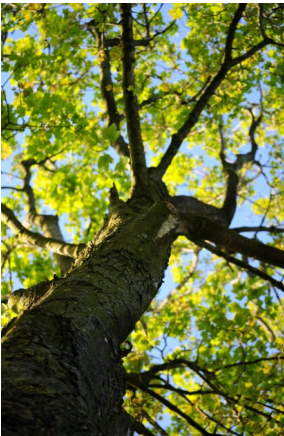
Finally, the Committee oversaw a complete overhaul of our finance systems to a new financial package designed specifically for Town and Parish Councils. We were exceptionally pleased to receive an internal audit report that judged our new systems as already being a 'reliable standard with very few significant matters arising from the audit, systems of control are good and provide reasonable assurance.' We are now aiming to receive the highest audit ratings in the future with the dedication of our Staff and Councillors!

Cllr Jayne Stansfield, Chair of the Finance and Policy Committee

Report of the Chair of the Environment Committee

It has been a pleasure to Chair the Environment Committee during this period. The Committee has led, and been involved in, a number of interesting projects and activities in the town which hopefully make it a better place to live and to visit.

The Council again ran and subsidised the very successful hanging basket scheme during the Spring and Summer of 2019, supplying baskets to town centre businesses and other properties, and providing a daily watering service. The efforts of Thornbury in Bloom led to the town being awarded a gold medal in the Champion of Champions class in the South West and then were awarded the overall trophy for being the best gold, making them the official 2019 Champion of Champions in the South West. The restrictions put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic have unfortunately affected the hanging basket scheme in the Summer of 2020.



The Committee has been very pleased to continue to develop the Poulterbrook environmental area in the Mundy Playing Fields. Plans include the purchase and planting of 12 trees, a picnic area and large areas of wildflower planting. It is hoped that this environmental area will increase biodiversity and also help to offset the environmental effects of development in the town. The Committee is currently progressing the provision of a drinking water fountain at the Mundy Playing Fields near the Pavilion.

The Committee continues to support Fairtrade initiatives in the town through the Fairtrade Steering Group, with the aim of promoting Fairtrade goods in the town. This includes the production and distribution of a leaflet that details which Fairtrade products are available in the town and where. The Steering Group supported Fairtrade fortnight again this year including a successful coffee morning with a visit from a Fairtrade grower. The Group also arranged a Fairtrade promotion in St Mary's Centre, supplying information on products available in the town and giving away a taste of Fairtrade chocolate.

Council continues to fund the Community Toilet Scheme. The Committee has reviewed the scheme and the premises included in it to ensure there is sufficient coverage in the town and that posters are displayed prominently.

The Committee continue to supply litter bins, dog bins, bus shelters and seats throughout the town. The Committee was very proud to install Council's first public recycling bin in the Mundy Playing Fields play area. Following requests from the public, the Committee have arranged the moving of a seat on the junction of Gillingstool and Oakleaze Road into a more suitable position. The Tree Warden continues to work on identifying further areas in the town that would benefit from tree planting. The Committee has continued to be very proud to continue providing funding towards the planting of new trees in the town.



The Committee continues to be regularly attended by a number of volunteer groups who keep us updated with their work. These include Sustainable Thornbury, Tree Strategy Group, Community Composting, Filnore Woods, Filnore Allotments, etc. Unfortunately the annual thank you evening for volunteers held each Spring had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 restrictions but the Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers who work tirelessly in Thornbury and the surrounding areas to make the town a better place to live and to visit. Their efforts are valued enormously by the Council and the town would simply not be the same place without them.

The Committee finalised plans with South Gloucestershire Council to change to perennial planting in the Grovesend roundabout and the large bed by Rock Street Car Park making the areas more sustainable and increase biodiversity. Council continues to pay South Gloucestershire Council for grass cutting, flower bed planting and maintenance, and dog bin emptying around the town. The Committee will begin discussions with South Gloucestershire Council in the summer to explore options for reducing the amount of grass cutting that they do for us with a view to increasing biodiversity in the town and potentially cutting costs.

Report of the Chairman of the Environment Committee cont'd...

Council's Tourist Information Centre has continued to operate efficiently with enquiries being dealt with by staff and a very dedicated volunteer helper. An accommodation guide was published again this year and copies of the Heritage Trail, supplied by the Museum, remain very popular.

I would like to thank my fellow Committee members for their efforts throughout the year and look forward to continuing the important projects that we are involved in, and also supporting the large number of volunteer groups, helping to improve the town's local environment.

Cllr Matt Stringer, Chair of the Environment Committee

Report of the Chairman of the Staffing Committee



The Staffing Committee continue to employ an HR support partner in Ellis Whittam. They have provided invaluable support over the past year on a wide variety of issues.

Over the past year there have been several staff changes and the Staffing Committee has been busy with staff recruitment and induction. We wish those that have departed all the very best for the future and welcome those that have joined us, all of whom are all settling in very well. On behalf of all Councillors, I would like to welcome our new members of staff.

The staff appraisal process continues to operated, and the staffing committee will be considering the outcomes of this at future meetings.

The Committee now oversees the budget for staff and councillor training and staff have received training on PAT testing, how to handle awkward customers, first aid and our new financial package. Training in other health & safety aspects and other areas will be undertaken over the next year. The training requirements reflect the audits carried out on a range of Council duties during the year.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Town Council staff for their commitment to the work they do and in ensuring excellent relations with members of the public.

Cllr Guy Rawlinson, Chair of the Staffing Committee

STATISTICS FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING Planning Applications

Year	Total Number of Applications Considered by Town Council	Total Number of Applications determined by South Glos Council	Total Number of Applications determined in line with Town Council's Comments	%
1997-98	178	127	108	85.0
1998-99	157	119	101	84.9
1999-2000	198	163	145	89.0
2000-01	205	166	152	91.6
2001-02	184	169	147	87.0
2002-03	212	185	161	87.0
2003-04	221	195	162	83.1
2004-05	255	170	144	84.7
2005-06	177	150	126	84.0
2006-07	201	153	127	83.0
2007-08	181	139	116	83.4
2008-09	146	123	106	86.1
2009-10	123	85	70	82.3
2010-11	128	120	106	88.3
2011-12	115	94	84	89.4
2012-13	105	92	78	84.8
2013-14	132	105	93	88.6
2014-15	162	156	118	88.0
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

As of 20/03/20—(79 determined in line, 18 not in line, 6 comments

Cemetery Statistics

Year	Number of Burials	Number of Interment of Cremated Remains	Number of Scattering of Ashes	TOTAL	Number of Advanced Purchase of Grave Spaces
1998-99	22	25	0	47	15
1999-2000	40	25	4	69	8
2000-01	33	26	1	60	9
2001-02	40	19	2	61	13
2002-03	26	26	2	54	23
2003-04	25	28	4	57	8
2004-05	26	30	2	58	18
2005-06	24	33	2	59	7
2006-07	25	23	5	53	16
2007-08	34	34	3	71	10
2008-09	33	33	3	69	23
2009-10	31	24	3	58	15
2010-11	22	35	2	59	14
2011-12	29	20	2	51	15
2012-13	30	40	1	71	9
2013-14	29	32	0	61	13
2014-15	24	38	1	63	14
2015-16	16	32	2	50	0
2016-17	36	32	1	69	0
2017-18	27	24	3	54	0
2018-19	28	20	5	53	0
2019-20	22	28	0	50	0

As of 16/03/20

Report of the Chairman of the Playing Fields and Cemetery Committee



It has been a pleasure to Chair the Playing Fields and Cemetery Committee during this period. The Committee has led, and been involved in, a number of interesting projects and activities in the playing fields and play areas of Thornbury, as well continuing to maintain Thornbury Cemetery to a high standard in its beautiful setting. The Committee aims to keep the playing fields and play areas for which it is responsible, safe, well-maintained and enjoyable places to be.

The Committee has supported Thornbury Town Football Club in making a number of enhancements to the facilities which have allowed their first team to continue to progress to higher leagues. Thornbury Rugby Club have been playing regularly at the Chantry Field and we continue to

provide a Portaloo during the rugby/football playing season for the use of players and spectators.

The Mundy Playing Fields once again played host to a number of large scale community events. Thornbury Carnival was again blessed with fine weather and large crowds. The Round Table Firework Fiesta was, as always, extremely well attended. The spectacular firework display was enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Council was very pleased to completely update the play area at Osprey Park which is proving very popular with local residents and many positive comments have been received. The £50,000 spent on the new play area was funded through normal Council funds as well as Community Infrastructure Levy funds. The Council is looking at updating and improving other play areas over the next few years and hopes to run a consultation process as soon as possible to find out more about residents' views on this. All of the play areas in the town for which the Council is responsible continue to be inspected daily by our outdoor team to keep them safe and usable, in addition to the annual RoSPA inspection.



Council continues to maintain the Skatepark and was very pleased to give a substantial grant towards work on the Hub at the site.



All of Council's open spaces and the Kington Lane Cemetery have continued to be maintained to a very high standard. This year the Cemetery accommodated a total of 50 burials, interments of cremated remains and scattering of ashes.

Town Council has a statutory obligation to maintain the closed churchyard at St. Mary's Church and members are extremely grateful to all the church volunteers who cut the grass regularly and keep the churchyard in such good order. The Committee is looking to make restorative repairs to parts of the War Memorial in the churchyard either this year or next depending on progress with grant applications.

Finally, it would be difficult to talk about this year without mentioning the unprecedented restrictions put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic. These have obviously affected us all, and certainly had an effect on the outdoor spaces that we look after. The Council is very grateful to the residents of Thornbury for respecting these restrictions and I would also like to thank our outdoor staff who have continued to work in these very difficult circumstances.

Overall it has been an interesting and productive year for the Playing Fields and Cemetery Committee and during 2020/2021 we look forward to continuing to provide safe and well maintained outdoor spaces for the residents of Thornbury, and the visitors to the town, to enjoy.

Cllr Helen Harrison, Chair of the Playing Fields and Cemetery Committee

Thornbury Town Council Grants 2019/2020

Small Business Grants

GRANT AID	£
North Avon Youth Theatre Company	400.00
Recycled Teenagers	250.00
Thornbury Duke of Edinburgh Award	400.00
Thornbury Chamber of Commerce	600.00
Thornbury Welcomes	520.00
Thornbury Rugby Football Club	890.00
Thornbury Pickleball Club	520.00
Four Towns & Vale Link Comm Transport	1,000.00
Thornbury Lipreaders	500.00
Thornbury Sea Cadets	500.00
Thornbury Christmas Lights Assoc.	420.00
TOTAL AWARDED	6,000.00

Thornbury Town Council—Revenue Grants

GRANT AID	£
Over 60's Tea Room	4,640.00
Thornbury In Bloom	1,500.00
Thornbury & District Heritage Trust	3,450.00
PHASE	3,360.00
Thornbury Arts Festival Trust	1,250.00
Thornbury Volunteer Centre	3,340.00
Citizens Advice South Gloucestershire	6,348.00
Thornbury & District Comm. Assoc.	4,100.00
Thornbury Community Composting	1,000.00
JIGSAW Thornbury	3,120.00
Thornbury Carnival	1,000.00
TOTAL AWARDED	33,108.00

What some of our grant recipients say:

Volunteer Centre, Thornbury: “We are the volunteer development agency for Thornbury and district. We promote, support and develop volunteering and provide a service which matches volunteers with organisations that need voluntary help. We provide training, advice and support on all matters relating to volunteering. We are supported by a small but dedicated team of Volunteer Co-ordinators. The Volunteer Centre is growing each year with the number of volunteers registering through us increasing. Last year we registered 206 volunteers through our office/website and 179 through the national volunteering database, Do-it.org. We posted 109 new opportunities and placed 90 volunteers within 44 different organisations. We supported 23 volunteer involving organisations through training, policy advice, workshops, one-to-one visits, health checks and best practice development. We work closely with local businesses and schools and offer schemes to support adults with learning disabilities and mental health issues. Volunteering breaks down social barriers and offers people opportunities to socialise with people from different social/cultural backgrounds. Volunteers support vulnerable people in society and enable them to live a rewarding life. Volunteering boosts the self-confidence and self-esteem of volunteers and by helping others in their local community improves the health and wellbeing of that community. The social value of volunteers to a community and their economic benefits are immeasurable.”

Thornbury Christmas Lights: “We were grateful for the councils donation which was used towards the purchase of the waterproof connectors for the radio controlled switches trialled at The Plain and Castle Street for the 2019 Christmas Lights Switch on. The trial was a success and the resulting **WOW** factor of the instantaneous show of light had every body stunned. Thank you Thornbury Town Council.”

The Over 60's Tearoom, Thornbury: “The Over 60's Tearoom has been running for nearly 26 years offering a place for visitors and local Thornbury residents to meet, have a cuppa and chat with other visitors and volunteers. Many of our visitors call in regularly as they know they will find a friendly face and company. One of our main aims is to combat loneliness. We are based in the Town Hall with access to the side of the property. We are open Mon—Fri, 10.00 am—4.00 pm, serving tea, coffee, hot chocolate, soup and squash at a very reasonable price. A cuppa and a biscuits costs only 30p! We can accommodate up to 20 people and most days are full! We are run entirely by volunteers, some of whom have been with us since the start! We receive a grant from the Town Council to cover 80% of our rent which enables us to keep our charges for the refreshments so low. Without this grant, we would not be able to keep the Tearoom running and we know that this would be a great loss to the local older community. We are told so often by visitors that they would be lost without us.”

A tribute to our friend and colleague, the late Councillor Clare Fardell



The Councillors and Staff from the Town Council will miss Clare enormously. Clare was first elected to the Town Council around 1983 and became Mayor in 1987-1988. Clare was an incredible force of energy, full of determination and passion. She was the driving force behind many activities and projects within the Town Council and the Community, for example, she was on the Arts Festival Committee in the 80s when it became nationally recognised as a high quality, innovative event.

CLLr Maggie Tyrrell said, 'I think the first project I worked on with her was the town's first ever Holiday Playscheme in 1987, set up at Gillingstool School. She had a creative mind and turned her innovative thinking to making community projects happen. She never chaired committees but she was the driving force behind the work of many of major schemes in the town. I think it was the last "face to face" Town Council meeting we had I remember her reporting back on the latest Fair Trade event she'd organised.'

Clare was still serving the Thornbury community faithfully even at the start of the Lockdown until she became unwell. She leaves behind a strong legacy and will be sorely missed

Avon & Somerset Constabulary

Thornbury Beat Team Report

The Thornbury Neighbourhood Policing Team and the Severnside Beat Team are based in their offices at the back of the Town Hall.

The sole purpose of a local beat team is to reassure the public that there is a police presence, and to deal with any long-running issues within the community. Having a local beat team ensures that the response officers are adequately resourced and don't become consumed by dealing with neighbourhood issues. An additional benefit to having a beat team is that both the community and other organisations can liaise with the same people. Over the last year in Thornbury, the Beat Team have worked in partnership with the anti-social behaviour team, housing associations, local schools and local authorities.

Whilst we continue to hold two monthly beat surgeries, attend CEF meetings and conduct high visibility patrols, we have found that an extremely effective way to communicate with the public is through Facebook. PC Paula Manos created a Facebook profile last year, and the residents of Thornbury have welcomed this. Although Facebook is a valuable tool, we would like to emphasise that residents should still report crime through either the 101 or 999 telephone service.

Over the last year, PC Natalie Jones has worked as a Schools Officer at The Castle School. This was both beneficial for the school and for the beat team, as Natalie got to know, and build a rapport, with many young people in the area. Natalie has thoroughly enjoyed her time working at The Castle School and plans to visit whenever she can to remind the students and teachers that she is still there for support.

An additional event we have held recently is the bike marking event in St Mary's Centre which saw a massive 51 bikes being marked. We will be sure to update the residents through our force website and through PC Paula Manos' Facebook page, once we have set a date for our next bike marking event.

During the Summer of 2019 there was a re-occurring issue with individuals acting recklessly on their mopeds across Thornbury. This was handled by the beat team using a Section 59, which could result in mopeds being seized. By doing this we were extremely successful in eradicating the problem and we are now confident that using Section 59's will prevent further problems in the future regarding mopeds.

With regard to drug use, the beat team ensure we patrol all of the hot spots that the public inform us of. We have also upped the amount of stop-and-searches that we conduct in order to seize any drugs that may be on a person. On a bigger scale, in October 2019, PC Paula Manos and PCSO Sheryl Drewitt discovered a large cannabis farm on the industrial estate which saw a massive £750,000 worth of cannabis seized and destroyed which was fabulous work by the beat team.

You can get in touch with us through our website

www.avonandsomerset.police.uk or by phoning 101



You can also keep up to date with what's happening through our beat page by simply typing in your post code.