



Summary of Congleton Town Council ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

“ We fund 50% of the cost of four Police Community Support Officers – Without our contribution there would be none in the Town ”

2013 - 2014 has seen a lot of changes in Congleton Town Council. Most notably in January 2014 the Town Council became responsible for the Streetscape services. This increased the number of staff working at the Town Hall from 17 to 28 and has doubled the amount of staff hours worked as all but four of the previous employees are part-time.

Community events continued to be a real strength of the town with the Mercian Regiment Homecoming March, Food and Drink Festival and Christmas Lights attracting thousands of people. Congleton won North West in Bloom after two years of being runner-up. The town also became cardiac smart winning a gold award.

The year saw a major consultation exercise on the Link Road and a deluge of planning applications for schemes around the town. The Town Council and partners were frustrated by the lack of movement on major plans surrounding the Scarborough 'Bridestones 2' development and the public realm improvements.

Opposite is a summary of the Town Council's Annual Report for 2013-14. The Council year runs from the 1 April to the 31 March.

The budgets for this annual report were set by the Council in Autumn 2012. Budget provision was made expecting streetscape services to be transferred early in the year. The delay in transfer was a key reason for the underspend in the 2013-14 budget.

Services Provided by Congleton Town Council

- We operate a Handyman Service who are responsible for cleaning up a variety of areas around the Town, removing litter, graffiti, tidying open areas, clearing pathways and alleys, anything to make the Town cleaner and tidier
- We operate a Streetscape Team consisting of a staff of 11 transferred from Cheshire East Borough Council on the 1st January 2014. Their role is to keep the Town tidy, empty litter bins and look after the ground maintenance activities in and around the Town and in Congleton Park
- We have a Town Centre Manager who helps organise a variety of events in the Town as well as spending time promoting the town and its businesses
- We have restored and refurbished the Town Hall which was inherited from Congleton Borough Council; this has cost about £750,000, although there are still some projects to complete. The finance for the work is provided by way of a low cost Government loan and an interest free loan from the former Congleton Borough Council
- The Council returns approximately £64,000 per year to organisations within Congleton to support their various activities, including making a significant contribution to the Citizens Advice Bureau
- The Council provides Allotments
- We manage and maintain the Town's Paddling Pool - open May - September
- All of our Councillors are volunteers and do not receive any remuneration or fee whatsoever

Town Mayor

For the majority of this report the Town Mayor was Councillor George Hayes. Cllr Hayes took over from Cllr Sally Holland on the 9th May 2013 – becoming the UK's Youngest Mayor. During his term in office the Town Mayor raised around £6000. £3000 has been donated to the Special Care Baby Unit at Macclesfield Hospital. The remaining £3,000 is being split amongst local causes.

Some of the major achievements for 2013-14 include:

- Transferred Streetscape operations from Cheshire East Borough Council to the Town Council
- Provided new branded vehicles and equipment to the Streetscape Team
- Continued and developed the well-respected Town Handy Person Scheme
- Replaced many of the Town's Christmas lights - and organised the switch on
- Supported town events such as the Food and Drink Festival, Open Space, Mercian March
- Produced quarterly Town Council and Community Newsletter (Bear Necessities)
- Continued to support an active Youth Committee to serve the Town
- Provided direct support to Congleton In Bloom, and Cheshire Pride Awards
- Achieved gold in North West in Bloom and became overall winner.
- Selected to represent North West in Bloom in Britain in Bloom competition in 2014
- Won Best Kept Website for www.congleton-tc.gov.uk
- Completed improvements to Radnor Park signage
- High Profile Congleton Partnership & liaison with businesses
- Notion of a Northern Link Road adopted in Cheshire East Local plan
- Co-hosted the Action for Market Town's national convention
- Promoted the Town Hall as a Wedding Venue and held further Wedding Fayre

How the Town Council is financed

The Town Council is funded through a 'precept' - which is an amount of money added to households annual Council Tax Bills to cover the services delivered by its Town or Parish Council. For 2013/14 the Town Council increased its precept by 2p per week (1.79%) for a band D property (£1.20 per year). The figures below show the amount the various committees spent, the amount they were allocated and the difference between the two.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL: ACCOUNTS 01.04.13– 31.03.14

	2013/14	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total
Finance and Policy Committee			
Corporate Management	123,693	137,349	13,656
Democratic Rep'n & Civic	44,755	51,312	6,557
Grants	62,616	77,033	14,417
Expenditure Totals	£231,064	£265,694	£34,630

	2013/14	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total
Community, Environment & Services Committee			
Expenditure Total	£255,782	£272,377	£16,595
Town Hall Committee			
Town Hall - Expenditure	155,210	157,560	2,350
Town Hall - Income	103,477	98,583	4,894
	51,733	58,977	7,244
Total Net Expenditure	£538,579	£597,048	£58,469
Capital Expenditure	99,169	96,778	-2,391
Transfer to Ear Marked reserves	52,500		
	151,669	96,778	-2,391
Total Spend 2013/14	£690,248	£693,826	£3,578
Precept	618,472		
Precept support grant	75,354		
	£693,826		

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL: MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS 2013-14

The Town Council has supported local voluntary and community groups with approximately £64,000 worth of grants in 2013-14.

Among those assisted were:

Grants given to 39 community groups and CW12 residents towards the hire of the Town Hall	<i>Notional rent</i>
Congleton Museum	<i>Project support</i>
Community Projects	<i>Annual Grant</i>
Congleton Partnership	<i>Annual grant</i>
Citizens Advice Bureau	<i>Christmas Lights</i>
Christmas Lights	<i>Bi-annual Congleton Carnival</i>
Carnival Committee	<i>Mercian march through town</i>
Mercian March	<i>Remembrance Day Parade</i>
Royal British Legion	<i>Church clock maintenance</i>
St Peter's Church	<i>Girl's trophies</i>
Vale Juniors	<i>Support for the Sound of Music</i>
Congleton Musical Theatre	<i>Ann Packer Centre support</i>
Eaton Bank Academy	<i>Support for Congleton Half Marathon</i>
Congleton Harriers	<i>Support for the Children's Choir</i>
Congleton Choral Society	<i>Support for 2013 Festival</i>
Cong Jazz and Blues Festival	<i>Cables etc. for Park events</i>
Friends of Congleton Park	<i>1 month costs</i>
The Smile Group	<i>Support for Christmas meals/presents</i>
Bromley Farm Friendship Group	
Danielle Wright-Humphreys	<i>Support for pageant</i>
Congleton Harriers	<i>Support for Cloud 9 Race</i>
Friends of Congleton Park	<i>Brass in The Park</i>
Ruby's Fund	<i>Auction prize</i>
Sol Theatre School	<i>Summer Theatre School 2014</i>
Bromley Farm Community Trust	<i>Support for Bromley Farm News</i>
Congleton Building Preservation Trust	<i>Support for Physic Garden</i>

To read the full report, visit our website: www.congleton-tc.gov.uk



Carnival Comes to Town

Carnival 14 is promising to be the biggest for years!

The fun starts on Friday 11 July with 'Holler' - a host of local bands including Adam French playing on Hankinson's field. Tickets £5. Saturday is the big party day - with a large procession of floats, bands, dancers, bikes and vehicles leaving Bromley Road at 11am and winding their way through the town to the park. The Park will be filled with fair rides, arena events, stalls, chill-out zones and food. FREE entry during the day.

Party in the Park features some top tribute bands including **Too Remy, Bootleg Blondie, Tina Turner** by Kinisha as well as **Chip Kendall** and the four finalist of 'The Act'.

Growing for Gold! IN BLOOM National Finalists!

Congleton is a National Finalist in this year's Britain in Bloom competition. We also want to hold on to the top position in North West in Bloom. The North West judges will be in town on Tuesday 22 July to judge Congleton in Bloom as well as Bromley Farm and Buglawton's Neighbourhood Award entries. The Britain in Bloom judges will visit on Wednesday 6 August. Many of the town's businesses have sponsored extra hanging baskets and tidied up the outside of their premises. Local groups have been rallying to the call for extra litter picks, planting and weeding! Please play your part by taking litter home or putting it in the bins. In May school children from a number of primary schools helped plant summer pots to decorate the town.



Standard tickets cost £5 for a child, £12 for an adult or £30 for a family of two adults and two children.

On Sunday **It's a Knockout!** returns to Congleton where up to 27 local teams will battle it out over giant inflatables - with plenty of water, foam and frivolity! It's free to come and watch!

For more information about Carnival, see Congleton Carnival 2014 on Facebook.



Phlok-ing to Congleton Independents

Congleton is the first town in Cheshire to launch Phlok - a new reward scheme, designed at encouraging people to shop local. Although it will be officially launched at the Carnival on 12 July, you can get involved now and start collecting and spending Phlok points in local shops.



Download the Phlok app for FREE and collect points by shopping or visiting shops with the Phlok sign.

The number of businesses involved is growing - but so far you can collect and spend Phlok points at:

Allens Newsagents, Bare Health, Browns Jewellers, Clarity's Hairdressing, Coffee Central, Davenport's, Delacey's Tapas Bar and Café, Congleton Town Council, Ecigolution Company, Hallmark Especially for You, Hollins and Hollinshead, Missy Boutique, Quigley's Wine and Cocktail Bar, Simply Retro, Tax Assist, Top Nosh Catering, The Address and Victoria Bed Company.

Cheshire Toy Shop, Just Be Jewellery and Retrospective Too, based at Glebe Farm, are also part of the Congleton Phlok offer.

Bear Necessities is produced by Congleton Town Council. The next newsletter will be delivered around 6 October. All contributions should be sent by 12 September to Jackie MacArthur at Congleton Town Hall, High Street, Congleton, CW12 1BN. Tel 01260 270350 or email jm@congletontowncouncil.co.uk



Congleton **beartown** where friends are made

