

TOWN COUNCIL
OF FRINTON AND WALTON

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022

COUNCILLOR ANN OXLEY



Councillor Ann Oxley, Agar Road Gardens

'This year has been my first year as Mayor of Frinton & Walton Town Council, an honour that I have served with the support of my Deputy Mayor, Councillor E.T Allen, Officers, and Members of the Town Council, all of whom I thank very much for their support throughout what has been a challenging year as the country recovers from the pandemic of Covid-19'

As we continue to make steps towards the 'new normal' of living and working with Covid-19, the challenges presented in the previous year have thankfully eased somewhat, so the Town Council were able to revert to holding meetings face-to-face in the Chamber once again. Whilst the office has endured outbreaks of Covid-19 amongst staff, they have adapted well to continue supporting the Council during these challenging periods.

During my year of Mayor, the Council saw some considerable staffing changes with the departure of the Deputy Clerk after serving the Town Council for 25 years, the retirement of the Town Clerk, and the arrival of the new Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk. The Town Council employed three new staff to run the newly opened Post Office that is housed within the Council House building at the Triangle Shopping Centre.

Throughout the challenges of Covid-19, the Town Council has continued to provide services to its citizens. We kept open services such as toilets, playgrounds, Walton market, beach huts, gardens, and allotments, all of which you will find more about in the report of facilities and services below.

The initiative to take over the Post Office franchise from the closure of the newsagent on the Triangle Shopping Centre in May, has ensured continuity of essential services to residents in the area. If you haven't yet discovered our new Post Office, I very much encourage you to take advantage of its full-time opening hours and the ease of having the nearby car park to ensure a smooth visit. It's important that we keep this vital service going for the community.



The newly opened Post Office housed within the Council House, Triangle Shopping Centre

I, along with my husband Councillor David Oxley, have been very involved in the Agar Road Gardens at Walton on the Naze from its inception when we bought the land in February 2020 saving it from development, to how it looks today.....a tranquil garden to sit in and take a break for a few moments and a welcome feast for the eyes to our visitors that arrive in Walton by train. The garden is the first thing visitors see when they arrive in the town. To mark HRH The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in the summer of this year, five newly planted trees will be dedicated and recorded under the Queen's Green

Canopy, a countrywide initiative that sees organisations committing to do the same so our Majesty's reign can be remembered and enjoyed for many years to come.



Councillor Ann Oxley and Councillor David Oxley, Agar Road Gardens

In the autumn, I secured a donation of 400 trees from Essex Forestry Commission that we planted in Agar Road Garden, the allotment site at the end of Grove Avenue in Walton, and the site between the railway car park and Walton Road in Walton. I've also worked closely with Tendring District Council on various garden projects in the local area and whilst on the theme of gardening, I am in the process of taking over the running of Walton in Bloom.

I'm delighted to have been able to assist and sponsor the formation of a much-needed youth club for the young people in the area, led by the district-based Youth & Community Commissioner for Essex County Council, providing a safe place where youths can attend each week to enjoy various games, activities, and support from role models in the community who have committed their time to invest in this initiative. The youth club runs each Tuesday 5-6.30pm at the YCMA Hall in Portobello Road, Walton.

I also give my time to several other volunteer roles including volunteering at the NHS Covid Vaccination Centres, the Westcliff Theatre and Frinton Summer Theatre, dog walking for the Cinnamon Trust for pet owners who are unable to walk their pet due to age or disability and lastly, working with community groups to supply Christmas goods to local families in need.

Once again, I think all those who have supported me in the role of Mayor and entrusted this important and privileged role to me.

Ann Oxley

Town Mayor & Councillor for Walton

Town Council Facilities and Services

The Town Council has continued to provide and upkeep a variety of facilities and services for the local population.

1. The Spinney



The Town Council completed a significant project of renovation works to the Spinney, in April 2019. These works have greatly enhanced this valued natural amenity, located at one of the prime entrances to Frinton, adjacent to the train station. During the year this attractive garden has been well maintained and received many positive comments. This year there has been the planting of some new plants and some minor repair work required where items were damaged.

2. Agar Road Gardens Walton on the Naze



A piece of land was purchased on 19th February 2020 opposite the train station at Walton-on-the-Naze at Church Road. This land has been transformed into an attractive garden similar to the Spinney. The works to landscape this area and plant new flowers and bushes have been largely undertaken by myself and Councillor David Oxley.

3. Great Holland Playground



A new playground was constructed at Great Holland and officially opened in February 2019. The playground continues to be well used by local children.

During this year there have been some minor repairs effected following the regular inspections by the Town Council's qualified playground inspector.

4. The Council House



The Town Council took freehold ownership of the Council House building on 11th June 2018. The building was refurbished between August and October 2019 with improvements made to the building, e.g. to ensure that access is in line with the requirements of disabled citizens. The newly refurbished Town Council Office was officially opened on 11th November 2019 and now houses the Post Office within its offices.

5. Toilets for Frinton and Walton



The Town Council did not support the closure by Tendring District Council of toilets in our town centres. Consequently, The Town Council acted and managed to rent the Old Way, Frinton toilet from Tendring District Council. This toilet was comprehensively refurbished as it had deteriorated considerably during the period that it had been shut. It re-opened to the public on 26th March 2019. Over 100 people applied for the job of part-time toilet attendant. The two selected candidates have done a wonderful job of keeping this toilet facility in pristine condition during the year, even adding features such as creating a small garden with flowers at the front of the building.

As Tendring Council shut the toilets at Mill Lane, Walton-on-the-Naze, the Town Council has continued to explore alternatives for the provision of toilets at other nearby

locations. Unfortunately, no suitable premises have been identified yet but The Town Council continue to look for a suitable alternative.

6. Post Office

The Triangle Shopping Centre Post Office closed in November 2020. In order to preserve this vital local facility, the Town Council applied to take on the responsibility of running the Post Office. Part of the Council House offices were transformed into a Post Office and opened in June 2021. The Post Office has full-time opening hours and is run by three members of experienced staff.

7. Crime and Disorder

The Town Council has continued to work with our local police force in keeping crime and particularly anti-social behaviour to a minimum in our area. The funding of six PCSO's and the regular Crime and Disorder meetings with the Police, which are held at the Council House, are vital in this respect. The Town Council are convinced that in these days of Police service cuts, our local PCSO's are invaluable and so a new two-year PCSO contract starting on 1st April 2021 was agreed with the Police. We will continue to work with local Police to ensure that our area remains a safe, low crime area to live in and visit.

8. Bus and Seafront Shelters



successful in reducing vandalism at this location.

The Town Council continues to maintain eight seafront shelters. During the year all seafront shelters were regularly cleaned and where necessary repaired by local building contractors. These shelters continue to be blighted by petty vandalism but any damage incurred is repaired as soon as possible. The Mosquito security device installed in August 2018 in the Clock Tower beachfront shelter appears to have been

9. Beach Huts



The Town Council's two beach huts in Frinton remain popular for the school holiday weeks, less so outside of those times. Hirers are always very complimentary on the location, condition and size of the huts.

10. The Columbine Centre



As with all entertainment venues, the Columbine Centre has been no different in its sufferance from the restrictions of Covid-19. However, some income from an otherwise closed centre was generated in 2020/2021 from the hire of the building by the NHS who used the building as its vaccination centre for Covid-19 vaccinations.

As restrictions have eased over the year, most of our regular hirers have returned and reinstated their regular bookings plus we have started to attract some new bookings as people start to feel more confident in venturing out. It remains a difficult time as the nation eases out of the pandemic, but we are researching ways in which we can promote the centre further in order to attract new bookings.

We have worked with requests from hirers to supply and install a fully-automatic defibrillator for users of the centre which is now in place and available.

11. Defibrillators



The Town Council has installed six defibrillators located at Frinton seafront toilets; Pavey's Estate Agent Connaught Avenue; The Naze, Walton; Great Holland Village Hall; 'The Ship' at Kirby-le-Soken and at the pharmacy, Kirby Cross. Various community groups helped fund these useful community assets. As stated above these assets are regularly inspected. They have been used on several occasions.

The Town Council has, as mentioned above, supplied and installed a further defibrillator for the use of hirers of the Columbine Centre.

12. Notice Boards and Public Seats

Notice Boards are part of the Town Council's communication system with all Town Council agendas published on each Notice Board prior to each meeting. A recent inventory of the noticeboards indicated the need for some restorative work to be completed to some of the boards, which has been undertaken by in-house staff.

The Town Council was responsible for 147 sponsored public seats; most of them being more than 25 years old. A report approved last year by the Town Council on 16th July recommended the refurbishment of some seats and that where seats are more than 25 years old, they should be removed or transferred to Tendring District Council. During the latter part of the year, this agreed approach began to be implemented reducing the number of seats that the Town Council has.

13. Allotments

The Town Council manages 3 allotment sites at Kirby-le-Soken, Wittonwood Road and Waltham Way. The Town Council agreed to hand back the Kirby-le-Soken site, which it rents, to the landowner from 1st October 2021. This is because there is less demand nowadays for allotment sites and they are costly to maintain. The other two allotment sites are owned by the Town Council, and they will continue as allotment facilities offered to interested parties. We have short waiting lists so if you would like to be considered for a plot, please enquire at the Town Council offices.

14. Walton Market

The market has remained open this year on every Thursday and on most Bank holidays. Regular promotional events are run to encourage customers to attend the market. It has been particularly busy during the summer months this year when many visitors came to Walton.
