

Chairman's Report 13th June 2019

Sincere thanks to all who took part in last Saturday's celebration of John Kyte Collett's wonderful gift of our park to Shepton. With the usual displays by our talented young people and a showcase for many of our charities and community groups, Collett Park Day is always a special date in the town's annual calendar. I want to thank all who volunteered and helped including Wayne Frapple, Edric and Caroline Hobbs, Matt Harrison, Martin Lovell, Mike Daniells and many Carnival Club members. But the greatest thanks must go to our Town Clerk, Charlotte Starkie, and members of her staff, Paula Robertson and Beccy Kingston-Wood, who had to work a disproportionate number of hours to deliver this year's event.

As a council, we now will decide on the long term future of not just the single Collett daytime fair, but the wider Collett Festival weekend that has included the well attended concerts and free children's festival day of recent years.

As a council, we are committed to delivering high quality well-managed events that can enhance wellbeing and support community involvement. We also want to attract visitors to sample the best of Shepton and see what a great place we live in. To that end, we will be holding the latest Sunday Market this weekend, with the theme of "Dad's Day Out" to coincide with UK Father's Day. Come and enjoy the entertainment and all the stalls and traders and please bring your friends!

The Town Council is also examining its future role in providing support for the regular markets in Shepton. We will be working with Mendip District Council and volunteers from the community to find the best way to promote, sustain and grow these weekly and monthly events.

We now have our new Council in place that will serve for the next 4 years. With over half of the recently elected councillors new to the Town Council, I will be working with the Clerk and members of all parties, and none, to identify and prioritise the projects and goals that we wish to take forward for the term of this session.

This week saw the second meeting to discuss Mendip Council's bid for Shepton to attract financial support from the government's "Future High Street Fund". If successful, this can provide co-funding towards capital projects that can bring transformative change to not just the high street but the whole of the town. The government has asked for innovative proposals that link together public transport, with provision of new homes and the delivery of public services. Held in the Art Bank in the old HSBC building on Tuesday, the meeting aimed at creating an action plan that can show how best we could use an injection of funds to revitalise our community and boost the local economy.

Chris Inchley, Chair, Shepton Mallet Town Council