

Chairman's Report 1st August 2019

We have enjoyed some sweltering days in recent weeks with temperatures at unprecedented levels across Europe, and the highest temperature ever recorded in the UK at 38.7C recently confirmed by the Met Office. These record highs do not bode well and point to the gathering pace of global warming. Planting many more trees has been identified as the best way to do what we can to offset the effects of climate change. As a Town Council we have to do all we can to minimise our carbon footprint. Making Shepton and the whole country carbon neutral is probably the biggest challenge we all face today.

In these recent hot and humid days, people have flocked to Shepton Mallet's Lido in Shaftgate Avenue. This week Beccy Manley and I attended a meeting with Fusion, the company that manages the lido. We had an opportunity to discuss how the facility is performing with Fusion manager, Rob Turner. The good news is that more people are using the pool this year and Fusion feel that many would welcome seeing improvements carried out to the facilities, with some keen to form a new friends' group.

There are already plans to increase the area of the lido to allow more room for sun-bathing and poolside games to improve the scope and range of the experience of visiting the pool. Outdoor swimming has become much more the rage in recent years, and the lido provides a safe well managed place to enjoy swimming in the open air.

I raised the current pricing structure with Rob Turner since I think there could be a reduction for families and groups visiting the facility. We also discussed improving advertising and promotion and this could include sponsorship by businesses to increase revenue streams to keep entry prices affordable. We also identified the need to improve street signage to direct people from out of town to the lido.

Our lido is a great asset and one that could be much more successful with the right imaginative approach. Beccy and I enjoyed our visit and it was great to reminisce about my past memories of visiting the swimming pool after school and my experience of jumping off the high board!

Stuart Brown, Mendip District Council's Chief Executive, is riding in the Prudential Ride London event. This is a 100 mile cycle ride around London and Surrey. This is the third year that Stuart has participated in the event raising money for the leading cancer charity, CLIC Sargent. If anyone wishes to sponsor him in his valiant efforts they can make a contribution by visiting <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stuartridelondon2019>

From time to time the police attend our town council meetings. It is always reassuring to see them and our PCSOs on patrol around the town. Their reports back to our council are a great way for us to gain an insight into the challenges they face. The local officers have offered councillors the opportunity to shadow them on their beat in Shepton, and I and others will take them up on this to gain an insight into the nature and range of issues they have to deal with.

Wherever possible the police try to keep in touch with our officers in the town council. This two way liaison provides valuable information for both parties. It is especially important that if anti-social behaviour occurs or any other suspicious activity is spotted, it can be reported and recorded by calling 101, or inform the Town Clerk in the council office on Park Road. We can try to address concerns and solve problems but only if we know about them.

Chris Inchley, Chair, Shepton Mallet Town Council