



**TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES
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WEEKLY COLUMN – 17 September 2020

Last week was a significant week for the town council as we were joined by two new councillors. The two casual vacancies were filled through co-option at a council meeting and there were six candidates in the running. It's encouraging to see that the town council is able to attract a healthy number of candidates. We're pleased to say that our council is now back up to 16 members with the addition of Cllr Gemma Kayum and Cllr Tim O'Connor. Gemma is a mother of four who adopted Shepton as her home some ten years ago. She has worked with children with additional needs for over 20 years and is passionate about making a positive difference particularly to children, young people and vulnerable adults in Shepton Mallet. She is also keen to promote our town and help shed light on the many features that make Shepton a great place to live. Tim is by day a Pensions Manager, by night involved in the world of comedy and the arts and in between, finds time for a love of sport, especially football - all of which he hopes will come in handy on the council. He is particularly interested in developing sports, wellbeing and play in Shepton Mallet, as well as continuing to support the local arts and culture scene.

In other news, this week has confirmed what many of us suspected when we were younger: as soon as the kids go back to school, the weather suddenly seems to improve. In all seriousness, we saw the temperature rise again and some of us were able to make the most of the end of the summer weather. Those of you who decided to visit Collett Park might have noticed its latest addition: a water bottle refill station. The town council have invested in a water fountain, sourced locally from Glastonbury Spring Water and located outside the public toilet blocks. This location is near where the original Victorian drinking fountain was situated, originally installed to promote public health. While times have changed and most of us have access to fresh drinking water at home, we hope this fountain will benefit our park users. For one, now as then, it's important to stay hydrated and we hope the water fountain will make the park more user-friendly. The other benefit of this water fountain is that it will make it easier for all of us to reduce our consumption of single-use plastic bottles. By carrying your own refillable water bottle, you can help protect our environment. A growing number of shops, cafes, restaurants and public buildings are allowing the public to refill their water bottles free of charge. For details of locations nearby visit the Refill website at www.refill.org.uk.

Finally, a reminder that as of 01 October nominations will be open for two awards which recognise the contributions made by individuals or groups to our community. The Community Awards recognise those local residents or community groups who volunteer their time to make our town a better place. The Honorary Award is a special award which will only be held every four years and will be given to those who have made a truly exceptional contribution to our town's wellbeing and legacy. For full details please visit the town council's website under 'Awards'.

Until next week!

Shepton Mallet Town Council

NOTES TO EDITORS

Shepton Mallet Town Council, Town Clerk – Ms Charlotte Starkie
Shepton Mallet Town Council Chairman – Councillor Edric Hobbs