



Ongar Town Council

Annual Town Council Assembly

Friday 31st May 2024

7.00pm

Budworth Hall

5 High St, Chipping Ongar, Ongar CM5 9JG

Chairman

Councillor Jason Gunn

Civic Awards 2024

- William Stock – Neighbourhood Watch
 - Ongar Academy
 - Adam Maulin
 - 3Food4U
 - Ongar Scouts
- Ongar/Cerizay Twinning

Stalls from community groups will be present for constituents to visit and talk to representatives. – pending confirmation.

Cheese and wine will be served at the end of the meeting.

USEFUL COUNCIL CONTACT NUMBERS

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL 0345 743 05
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL. 01992 564000
ONGAR TOWN COUNCIL 01277 365348

Report of the Chairman of The Town Council

As Chairman of the town council, it falls to me to chair the annual Town Council Assembly, which is not a Town council meeting but a meeting of the local electorate. So, I warmly welcome you all here this evening. Thank you for attending the Annual Town meeting and civic awards, it is lovely to see you all here this evening.

This short report shows some of the activities OTC and its constituent councillors have been involved in this year; here are a few of the highlights:

- Organising and delivering the annual Remembrance Sunday Service at the Ongar War Memorial.
- Attending the unveiling of the Edwyn Gilmore Bench at the Pétanque Park
- Visiting the 3food4U initiative at Zinc Arts Centre and attending the 5-year celebration at the Vojan Restaurant.
- Attending the Ongar Neighbourhood Plan, residents' meetings with regards to new housing developments in Ongar.
- Attending the opening of the new Ongar Museum by the Ongar Millennium History Society in Budworth Hall
- Organising the annual 'Christmas Window Competition' for businesses in Ongar, that was won by Senners newsagents, with two other businesses awarded prizes.
- Attending the first ever Menorah lighting ceremony as part of the Hannukah festival in Ongar High Street, this was a new temporary installation supported by both the Town and County council.
- Taking part in community litter picks.
- 3 councillors attended the annual twinning event in Cerizay, France. OTC Chairman, Jason Gunn, gave a speech in both French and English marking the importance of the 40th anniversary, and the benefits and value that the twinning arrangement brings to both towns. Gifts marking the occasion were exchanged between the two towns.



New Ongar Town Sign



Exchange of gifts between OTC Chairman and the Mayor of Cerizay to mark the 40th anniversary of twinning between our two towns.

- Awarding grants to local groups.
- Planting 7 trees on the nature reserve to commemorate the late HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee for all to enjoy.
- Updating the Ongar Town Council Website community links with information about local groups along with providing guidance and signposting to support and reporting of Anti-social behaviour.
- Replacing and installing the new Ongar Town sign.
- Commenting on 64 planning applications as statutory authority and speaking at District council planning committees (on behalf of residents).
- Provision and emptying of 10 dog waste bins.
- Provisions of cemetery and providing burial plots
- Reporting Highways issues to Essex County Council
- Maintaining open spaces and play areas.
- Maintaining 43 allotment plots at Castle Street and 13 plots at Moreton Road allotment site.
- Councillors attending the Ride London Event in Ongar.

Financially, OTC continues to maintain sufficiency of its financial reserves alongside designated funds that are annually increased. This coming year the precept is £312,000.

Looking to the future, the priorities of the council for the coming year include:

- Creating a Town Council staffing structure which meets the demands of Ongar Town.
- Working with the Ongar Neighbourhood Planning Group to ensure that both planning and additional resources are used to enhance and benefit the town and community.
- Enhancing and improving our open spaces, nature reserve and play areas.
- Assessing and implementing the best future option for provision of CCTV for the town.
- Supporting Essex Police with recruitment of police community support officers (PCSOs) for Ongar
- Working with our wider community partners, including our clubs, societies, and schools to enhance the town we live in.

OTC are responsible for four play parks, a recreation field, specific street lighting, allotments, some of the town CCTV cameras, the nature reserve, and the cemetery.

Mike Letch 1957 – 2024



Finally, I would like to express our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of our previous locum Clerk Mr Mike Letch. Mr Letch was our locum clerk for a number of years, and we sadly lost him in February this year. He worked tirelessly to help support the town council and its work. His passing has been strongly felt not only by those who worked with him in the town council but also the wider Essex Town and Parish Councils network. We thank him for his hard work, diligence, and support.

Ongar Town Council continues to be committed to serving and improving the lives for all its residents.

Local Councils - Who does what?

Within the borders of Essex there are County, District and Town and Parish councils. All have clearly defined roles, although there may be duplication and overlap of some of these responsibilities.

Essex County Council

Epping Forest District Council

Ongar Town Council

CHILDRENS SERVICES

Schools: Nursery, primary, secondary, and special pre-school education
Youth, adult, family, and community education, student support
Children's and families 'service including Welfare, fostering, adoption and child protection.
Youth centres, youth justice secure accommodation and youth offending teams

HIGHWAYS

Street Lighting
Traffic management and road safety
Highway Maintenance
Streetlights marked with a label beginning with '6' followed by 3 digits.
Bus Shelters, street furniture (some)

PASSENGER TRANSPORT

Public transport, discounted travel schemes and local
Transport coordination

SOCIAL CARE

Adult Services
Services for older people including nursing home, residential and day care needs
Services for people with a physical and or learning disability or mental health need
Asylum Seekers
Employment Support Services

HOUSING

Social Housing
Housing Benefit and welfare services
Homelessness
Housing strategy

CULTURAL SERVICES

Culture and heritage including archives and museums
Parish Archive
Libraries and information services

LEISURE AND RECREATION

Recreation and sport (also County Council)
Open spaces, common land, footpaths
Playgrounds
Allotments
Nature reserve

BURIAL GROUNDS (SOME)

WASTE AND RECYCLING

Collection
Disposal
Dog Bins that are owned by OTC
Litter bins owned by OTC

PLANNING

Building and development control
Consultation, public enquiry representation
Planning policy including conservation and listed buildings
Environmental initiatives
Economic development

WIDER STATUTORY FUNCTIONS

Collection of council tax and non domestic rates (business rates)
Setting the local town and parish council rate (Precept)
Registrations of births, deaths and marriages
Elections: Local, national including registration of electors
Emergency Planning
Local Land Charges

CRIME AND DISORDER

Community safety including provision of CCTV
Environmental enforcement
Anti-social behaviour

For anyone who has difficulty distinguishing between the different coloured text, an easy read table outlining these responsibilities will be available shortly on the OTC website.