

## Liskeard Town Council

At the **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** held IN THE Public Hall on **Thursday 21 March 2024 at 7 p.m.** there were present:

The Mayor – Councillor Simon Cassidy – in the Chair  
The Town Clerk – Mr Steve Vinson

Councillors – Tracy Adams, David Braithwaite, Rachel Brooks, Nick Craker, Richard Dorling, Jane Pascoe, Lori Reid, Naomi Taylor and Christina Whitty

Liskeard Town Council – Yvette Hayward and Mandy Hancock

49 Members of the public

The Mayor briefly introduced all Councillors present to the community.

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Councillors Kerry Cassidy and Julian Smith

### **2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD IN THE PUBLIC HALL ON THURSDAY 16 MARCH 2023** – The minutes were noted.

### **3. CHAIR'S REPORT 2024**

The Mayor, Councillor Simon Cassidy gave the following report:

There have been many highs and some lows during my time as Mayor. There have also been some sad times, but I've always loved how we have pulled together as a community. Someone once said to me that our Town has nothing, but I will always disagree. This town has a beating heart and a soul to be proud of and the spirit of our community is the greatest thing of all. Only by working together can we make things better for all.

I have been Mayor for three years, and Christina Whitty with her consort Terry has supported me as Deputy Mayor during that time.

The town has many truly amazing individuals who work tirelessly to make our town a better place.

We have strengthened our twinning relationship with Quimperle in France, and created a new link with Kopychyntsi in Ukraine. Tash Hewitt and Councillor Naomi Taylor have done some great work supporting young people in the town. The Safer Liskeard pop ups have continued providing one to one contact between the community and the police which is reassuring.

Over the last year, the town has enjoyed some great things:

- May – the Coronation when the Scouts organized a great event, the centre of town was lit up red, white and blue, the lights up team put the bunting up, all school children received a commemorative badge, and a tree was planted
- June – the Council signed the Armed Forces Covenant, and I became an honorary cub scout

- July – Liskeard Show, Lighthouse community group moved to new premises repurposing an empty building in the town centre, Father Gilmour at the Catholic church celebrated 50 years since he was ordained, Liskeard Leisure Centre celebrated 50 years, and the town said farewell to the Rev Andy Day from the Methodist Church who left the area
- August - Scouts Summer funday at Castle Park
- September - Visit of Quimperle to Liskeard, Carnival, Liskeard Unlocked, and Wildanet opened its new training academy
- October - Liskeard in Bloom won several awards for the floral displays in town, the Council achieved a bronze award from the Defense Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS), prime stock and opening of the Workshed in the cattle market, I celebrated Dashain with the Nepalese Community, Flower Club reached its emerald anniversary, and Caradon Swimming Club celebrated 50 years
- November - Remembrance events, the wettest and best attended – thanks to all involved - new Councillor Tracy Adams joined the town council
- December - Christmas events including the lantern parade, Christmas lights, trees thanks to David Braithwaite, the library projection mapping, I went on my first aid trip to Ukraine when the twinning documents were signed. I joined teams at the Salvation Army Hall serving dinner on Christmas Day.
- January – the Town Council took delivery of its new e cargo bike supporting its green agenda, the museum opened its fantastic new Threads exhibition, and the Lions pantomime returned
- February – the town said goodbye to Kevin Grant and Steve McGuire from the Royal British Legion who both moved away, I did another trip to Ukraine, and planted trees in Thorn Park as a place to remember young people who have been lost in the town.

The year has seen a resurgence of sport, particularly women and girls rugby going from strength to strength. The Liskeard boxing club is also achieving great things.

#### **4. SAFER LISKEARD**

Lucy Allison (Community Safety Officer) and Katherine James (Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) caseworker) explained the aim of Safer Liskeard is to improve community safety and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour by targeting persistent problem places and people within the geographical area and work with communities, partners and the business and voluntary sectors to develop sustainable solutions.

Liskeard is one of ten towns in Cornwall with a Safer Town initiative. The key to them being able to take action is reporting via official channels, they cannot act on posts on social media. If more crimes are reported they will also be allocated more resources.

Their priorities are:

- Drug related harm and recovery (including drug networks/ county lines)
- Domestic abuse and sexual violence and reducing violence against women and girls
- Taking pride in Liskeard and improved feelings of safety
- Community engagement and building resilience
- Youth engagement

They deliver police and Safer Liskeard community drop ins – a pop-up shop for members of the public to speak to a broad range of agencies about any community safety issues or concerns. These are usually held on the last Thursday of the month in different locations, such as Morrisons,

the Co-op, the library and they will be outside when the weather improves. You can find details on the Liskeard Police social media pages <https://www.facebook.com/LiskeardPolice>

In response to a question, it was confirmed the Liskeard police station would be reopening, but a date is not yet available as some internal works are required to the building. In the meantime, residents could call at the Looe police station.

#### Latest crime data for Liskeard

Crime Group	Rate per 1000	Year to Nov-23	Year to Nov-22	Change n	Change %
Arson	0.6	7	7	0	0%
Bicycle Theft	0.3	3	2	1	50%
<i>Burglary - Business and Community</i>	1.0	11	24	-13	-54%
<i>Burglary - Residential</i>	2.0	22	23	-1	-4%
Criminal Damage	11.5	125	159	-34	-21%
Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society	1.9	21	15	6	40%
Notifiable Reported Incident	0.5	5	0	5	
Other Sexual Offences	3.2	35	21	14	67%
Other Theft	6.8	74	101	-27	-27%
Possession of Drugs	1.6	17	13	4	31%
Possession of Weapons	1.6	17	15	2	13%
Public Order Offences	5.5	60	95	-35	-37%
Rape	1.8	20	19	1	5%
Robbery	0.7	8	5	3	60%
Shoplifting	12.1	132	142	-10	-7%
Stalking and Harassment	10.9	119	139	-20	-14%
Theft from the Person	0.6	7	2	5	250%
Trafficking of Drugs	0.7	8	5	3	60%
Vehicle Offences	1.7	19	27	-8	-30%
Violence with Injury	12.7	139	139	0	0%
Violence without Injury	16.2	177	198	-21	-11%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>94.1</b>	<b>1026</b>	<b>1151</b>	<b>-125</b>	<b>-11%</b>
Domestic abuse	16.7	182	202	-20	-10%
Victims U18	67.8	152	135	17	13%

The data covers 12 months up to the end of November 2023

Although crime rates remain high in the town, the total number of crimes has reduced over the 12-month period - the biggest reductions are in criminal damage, public order, and other theft. Rates of criminal damage, however, remain above the average seen across the other towns.

Other Sexual offences have increased, and rates are high - the Safer Cornwall Amethyst Team are currently doing some analysis across Cornwall to see where the increase lies in sexual offences - early indications appear to show that this can be related to peer on peer offences as there has been no increase in domestic related sexual offences or historical offences.

Shoplifting offences have reduced over the year but again rates remain high. This is the same with stalking and harassment offences in that there has been an in-year reduction.

There has been an increase in the number of offences where the victim is aged under 18.

Violence with injury has remained stable when compared with the previous year.

**5. PLOUGHMAN'S FESTIVAL – How they used a grant from Liskeard Town Council of £1,000 in August 2023 to help provide a free community event**

Stuart Houghton explained that it all started in 2014. Tony Wood approached members of the Town Council to see if they would support his idea to hold an annual celebration in the Town on the date of a Charter Fare as the Feast of Assumption, in August. He intended that this would be a free to attend event and was supported by the Town Clerk and Mayor, and other councillors who joined him to form a committee.

The first event in 2014 consisted of a 'Farmers' market on the Parade followed by an afternoon of musical entertainment, with food concessions and children's entertainment, locally sourced, in Westbourne Gardens. It was a success, and arrangements were started to continue to organise this as an annual event, and was successfully held in 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018, all on Westbourne Gardens.

A legacy from this first event is the regular 'farmers' market now held in the cattle market car park (Workshed).

In 2019 the event was cancelled due to extremely inclement weather which made the restricted access into Westbourne Gardens impractical. The success of the Fare had increased the size and amount of equipment and other attractions that needed to be carried into the gardens.

Again, the Fare was cancelled in 2020 and 2021, due to the Covid pandemic.

The pandemic restrictions were removed early in 2022 and arrangements started for the Fare to be held again. A lesson learnt from the events held in Westbourne gardens was that as the Fare had grown it would not be possible to carry the large generators and stage equipment into the garden, therefore an alternative venue was sought.

We also realized that as the event had grown it had created the problem of additional costs and needed to fulfill our obligations and aspirations, such as increased power requirements, toilet facilities, security and paramedics. It was also decided that the day should be referred to as a festival not a fare.

Alternative locations were discussed with the Liskeard School cricket field in Coldstyle Road being the favoured site, which was agreed by the headteacher.

Since 2022 we have held the Ploughman's Festival at this location and have requested permission to hold it there again this year. Each year we try to improve the entertainment and facilities we provide.

We also try to support the local business community by engaging as many local / South East Cornwall businesses as possible. These include the supplier of bar supplies, staging, sound and lighting, performers, generators, toilets, first aid, and the local 'market traders'.

The budget for last year's event was about £10,000 and this year will be approximately £11,000. We are financed by donations from businesses in the town, our own fundraising event, sponsors, and grants such as the one received from the Town Council.

Our aim is to continue to offer this as a free to attend event, but the ever-increasing costs makes obtaining donations and support from the businesses in the town more onerous each year. We held a fundraising event last year and are planning a 'bigger and better' one this year.

The festival has a reputation of being professionally organised with all necessary facilities and quality performers. Our motto is 'For the Community by the Community'.

The festival always needs more volunteers, so if anybody would like to get involved in some way, please contact the team <https://www.facebook.com/ploughmansfestival/>

## **6. GRANTS AVAILABLE**

Liskeard Town Council allocates a grants budget annually to assist other organisations within the town to achieve projects, services, exhibitions and events of benefit to the town and its residents. Applications are considered monthly at Council meetings and applicants are welcome to attend and discuss their project.

Eva Bowles Memorial Fund helps local young people to take part and enjoy music making in all its various forms. Grants are available to students up to and including age 18 who live within the Liskeard town boundary. Applications must be supported by a professional music teacher. There is currently approximately £3,000 remaining in the fund.

Alex Page Trust supports young people, under the age of 21 living in the Liskeard area who want to pursue their career through a college or a work-based apprenticeship.

During the last year we have supported one student who was given the chance to travel to Ghana as a volunteer working in a local medical centre and orphanage. Travelling to such a remote part of the world is not straightforward. Travel to London, then a flight to Amsterdam, then another to Accra and then on to your destination. But it was a unique opportunity for them to gain valuable experience and to see for themselves the difficulties people living in poorer countries have to face on a daily basis.

The trust started the year with £11,163.76 and after income of £1,113.31 and making a grant of £1,165.78 we now have £11,111.29 to help more young people with their career.

Full details of all of these funds together with application forms are available on the Town Council website <https://www.liskeard.gov.uk/services-info/grants/>

## **7. CORNWALL AND DEVON SENDING LOVE TO UKRAINE**

Darren Tait explained that he organised and ran Cornwall and Devon Sending Love to Ukraine, which started out as a Cornwall only organisation when the war in Ukraine started and he first saw reports on the television, and thought 'What can I do?', Maybe take a minibus to Warsaw and find an aid centre? And within a few days more people wanted to join him.

On the first trip they passed coaches coming out of Ukraine full of refugees and knew they would keep going. People from Devon soon wanted to join them. They have now taken 168 vans of aid to Ukraine, 2 vans are on the way, and another trip leaves next week with Darren and 6 other vans, which will make 177.

The aid is taken to a warehouse in Warsaw, where it is checked, and matched to where it is needed in Ukraine, going to all parts of the country including those worst affected. They take all types of aid, particularly personal hygiene products and have even transported an incubator for a baby unit, and within days received back a picture of it in use.

It costs approximately £1,200 to take a van over, which includes fuel, the ferry and accommodation. It is becoming more difficult to find vans to take and therefore they are hiring them at £670. However, by limiting the trips to small vans they are able to track where all their aid from here to the end user, making sure it gets to a genuine end user, which would not be possible if it was packed onto a large arctic.

Liskeard is currently one of five towns in the UK to have twinned with a town in Ukraine.

If anybody would like to help, please contact Darren and the team. More information is available at <https://sendinglovetoukraine.org/>

## **8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No questions

## **9. COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARDS 2024**

Awards were made to people and groups who have made a positive difference to life in Liskeard. Following some amazing nominations, Awards were presented to:

### Individuals

- Liam Crabtree – following a tragic loss Liam contacted the Church for guidance. As a single parent to 5 children he was seeing his own life change and wanted to help others in our town – particularly men. He started a weekly group called “Soar” to support men. He follows up many of the men personally and is a huge encouragement to them and those working with him. He cares deeply for this town and feels that he has been given a second chance and wants to give others one too.
- Colin Frizzel – best known as our town road sweeper, keeping the town looking clean, but much more than that taking pride in his work and his town. Always a friendly face in the street willing to help.
- Natasha Hewitt - a youth officer in Liskeard, who has gone above and beyond what is expected of her in providing support to the young people of our town. Tash strives to make sure the youth club runs every week offering a safe space and often a meal for young people in the town.
- Gwyneth McLoughlin – secretary of the Royal British legion, supporter of Children’s Hospice South West and other community events.

- James Moon - has always been a passionate representative of the local farming industry, starting with the Young Farmers, county leadership roles in the NFU. He has been involved in the LEADER scheme and the Horizon 2020 project. He is a director of the CQLP which is owned by its farmer members. He is Secretary of the Primestock Show, sings with the Liskerrett and Pelynt Male Voice Choirs, a member of the Rotary Club and has assisted the Old Cornwall Society with their Crying the Neck for many years.
- Mary Snell BEM - has been teaching swimming at Lux Park Leisure centre in Liskeard for 50 years. For many of those years Mary worked as a volunteer coach teaching hundreds of children how to swim. Mary Snell received a BEM honour in 2015 for her services to physical education, which recognised her then 42 years as a voluntary swimming teacher.
- Michael Sparks – helps maintain the green space at Maudlin Field, collaborating with other volunteers on the Maudlin Field Community Project to install benches and erect goalposts. He has maintained the woodland walk area off the Morrison’s end of Charter Way – litter picking, keeping paths cut back, etc.
- Sue Whittington - If you go to Liskeard rugby club early on a cold winter Sunday morning, you will inevitably see Sue doing one of the hundreds of jobs that need doing to enable the youth teams to play matches each week. She organises the annual presentation evening which sees two back-to-back sessions of a full public hall – no easy task indeed! She also serves on the County committee for youth rugby. Her selfless dedication to the sport has enabled youth rugby to thrive in our town. She genuinely cares about every single player (but doesn’t take any nonsense!)

#### Groups

- Greg Spargo & Sarah Snowdon - purchased and re-opened the Barley Sheaf pub two years ago and the community now have a pleasant, safe family environment in which to meet. They spent six months bringing the building back to standard, engaging local tradesmen for the extensive repairs. The pool and darts teams have a home again. Live music is enjoyed by many alongside the long running Quiz Nights. As the only owner fronted “proper pub” remaining in Liskeard, the Barley Sheaf provides a massive social and economic benefit to the town.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Liskeard Scouts - have stepped up to the plate over the last year in organising events both for the Coronation, and other events in Castle Park, they’ve really gone above and beyond what is normally expected of them. They always support the Remembrance Day parade and also the Freedom of the Town parade. They work well with other organisations and have supported the Lions’ Panto. They have even done Christmas card and leaflet deliveries. No matter what it is they are always willing to lend a hand.

#### Young People

- Rose Ramwell - is the town’s first female mace bearer. She attends all civic occasions, even when not required to undertake mace bearing duties. She was selected to attend the Scout jamboree in Korea which she fundraised for and also given public presentations. She is an aspirational young person.