



# Berwick Town Council

# Newsletter



July 2023 edition

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## A Message from the Mayor

Welcome to the print edition of our monthly newsletter.

Councillors agreed on Monday 26th June to investigate the possibility of having our own Hot Pressure Washer, with which to tackle the seasonal issue of seagull mess on the pavements, particularly in the town centre. This is a direct response to the number one criticism of both residents and visitors and proof that we will step up when required.



At the same meeting, councillors agreed to authorise the Clerk to purchase a EV flatbed van, which would better meet the needs of our Town Wardens and, at the same time, show that we are doing our small bit for the environment, which will further reduce the Council's climate impact.

Finally, an apology. This is our first year where our Wardens were responsible for the floral displays in planters and hanging baskets throughout the town and, for a number of reasons, we have not achieved the standard we had aimed for. We have learnt a number of painful lessons but be assured that our next plantings will be better. I would personally like to thank Cllr. Turton for working tirelessly alongside our team in developing their horticultural skills.

*Cllr John Robertson*

## Berwick Neighbourhood Policing Team

As we come into the warmer months and school holidays, historically we see an increase in Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). This is not unique to our area. We understand that ASB can have a negative effect on both Communities and individuals. The experience can have a range of emotional impacts on both. To tackle this, Berwick Neighbourhood Policing Team have recently provided ASB inputs in our local Middle Schools to all pupils. The aim of this is to provide education and prevention and is part of our wider problem-solving plan to tackle the issue. We have also recently also provided inputs on Internet safety and sending indecent images to all Middle School and Longridge Towers pupils.

From the 3rd of July 2023 we will be taking part in the ASB Awareness Week 2023 which is a National Campaign and week of Action. Northumbria Police and Berwick NPT will be working with our partners from Northumberland County Council and Housing who will be providing information to the public about the various reporting mechanisms should you experience ASB. During the week we will continue to provide ASB input in local schools and will be targeting our patrols in ASB Hot spot areas.

That week will also see Berwick Mini Police who are run by the Berwick NPT Team deploy for the last time before the current cohort of Mini Officers move on to Middle School. They have done some excellent work around the Town, taking part in litter picks, community speed checks, the Riding of the Bounds and the Remembrance Day Parade to name a few. We thank them for their efforts for which we are incredibly proud of them all.

A/Sgt 953 Darren Robson Berwick Neighbourhood Policing Team

## Our Beaches



It may be a bit chilly for a full dip in the sea for some of us but it is worth reminding ourselves of the wonderful beaches we have here in Berwick and how we can help to keep them beautiful. Northumberland beaches are some of the best in the UK, and visitors have been coming to Spittal beach since the 18th century, when it was a popular spa and bathing resort.

Northumberland County Council are responsible for the general state of the beaches and work hard to ensure our coastline is kept clean for the benefit of local people and visitors but there will be times when they need information from us and you. There are also tireless volunteers who litter pick on our beaches, keeping them clear of debris

that can harm animals and people alike.

Over the summer we anticipate thousands of visitors to Berwick and therefore more litter. You can report a full bin by using the QR code on the bin in question or by informing the Town Council Office on Marygate.

Sadly there are times when animals are washed up onto the beach – when this happens please report it to NCC on 0345 600 6400 as soon as you can.

So if you're out and about this summer, take your litter home if the bins are full and encourage visitors to do so. We have some of the best beaches & countryside in the world and we want it to stay that way.

## Annual Accounts

Annual accounts don't sound like a hot topic for conversation. Annual accounts of a small local authority even less so. There's still a story to tell though. Small local authorities like ourselves have stricter rules than their larger counterparts. We don't operate overdrafts, and we don't borrow frequently. We're expected to work to a budget that's published in January for the following financial year, and we're expected to stick to it.

We have an audit regime we have to comply with too. Effectively there are three layers of control over our finances. There are the checks we do ourselves, like getting two councillors to approve every payment. Then there are the checks our internal auditors do, checking we have the right systems in place to control finances and manage risks. Finally, there are the checks the external auditors do, to

make sure that between us and the internal auditors we've done all the right things.

Why tell you all about this now?

As well as publishing our budget and lists of payments throughout the year, we have to open up our accounts to anyone registered to vote in Berwick upon Tweed. We're about to publish the dates and times when you can come in and ask to see documents relating to our accounts. We go as far as the law allows us in terms of publishing details during the year, and we're proud of our track record of keeping the internal and external auditors satisfied over the last six years. If you've any questions, why not email the Town Clerk? [Town.clerk@berwick-tc.gov.uk](mailto:Town.clerk@berwick-tc.gov.uk)

## The Crowning of the Tweed Salmon Queen

An event that originally started in the 13th Century and was revived around 70 years ago, the Crowning of the Salmon Queen is a key event in the community calendar and celebrates the town's history of fishing. Locals have happy memories of crowning in past years but sadly, with the loss of the committee a few years back, the event was in danger of disappearing. The Town Council stepped in to ensure that the event took place and wasn't lost again to history but our involvement was always intended to be a temporary fix.

We're delighted therefore that a group of local residents took up the challenge and created a new Tweed Salmon Queen Committee after last year's event. The team, which includes a previously crowned Salmon Queen, has already successfully organised a series of fundraising events, a competition to create a new logo, and are prepared for their first crowning. The prize winning logo, pictured here, was designed by Trulli Hogg, whose entry was submitted through JAG Art 82.

We've got a lot of ideas of how we can develop the event in the future but for our first year we're concentrating on getting it right," said Sharon Johnston, chair of the committee, "next year we plan to expand the event and run events through the year to celebrate this unique part of the town's heritage."

2023's Salmon Queen will be Mae Morton, a year 10 pupil at Berwick Academy and her attendants are Brooklyn Girdwood and Mayley Mitchell from Prior Park First School and Anna Nicoll and Adele Pringle from Tweed Middle School.

The crowning will take place on Thursday 20th July at 7pm in the Queen's Garden Tweedmouth, followed by the Tweed Salmon Supper at Tweedmouth Bowling Club at 7:30pm (tickets £10, to book telephone 07943 601648. There will be a church service celebrating the crowning on Sunday 23rd July at Tweedmouth Parish Church.



## Local Charity Fair

Have you ever wondered about volunteering or would you or a friend benefit from support from a local charity? Come and find out the information you need at the Berwick Local Charity Fair which will be held in the Town Hall on 22nd July 10am-3pm.

Organised by the Town Council and Berwick Chamber of Trade and Commerce, this annual event brings together representatives of 20 local charities and volunteer organisations to meet with residents. Groups who can't attend on the day will be sharing leaflets and information.

The event is not all business! There's room for children's activities, a tombola and tea and coffee.



## Music and Performance on Marygate



There is a new Town Council initiative to try and encourage more people onto the High Street on Saturdays this summer. The space in front of the Town Hall is the perfect place to provide entertainment while people shop or enjoy an ice cream in the sunshine!

Cllr Mike Greener is spearheading this new idea and he is looking for musicians and performers to show off their skills over July through to September on Marygate – this could be music, dance, short plays, re-enactments, live art, keep fit – be creative! Perhaps you have a creative skill that you have never had the opportunity to show before, maybe you are a band that has never performed in public before – let us know!

We are hoping to provide some form of music and/or performance every Saturday from 8th July - 2nd September inclusive. Given that it is an outside space, the entertainment will be strictly weather dependent and will run from 11-3pm. There will be 2 slots available each day - 11am-1pm & 1pm-3pm. If you can't fill 2 whole hours do let us know, as we may be able to fit more than one act in each time period.

There will also be a stand available for a local charity every Saturday for the full 4 hours.

If you would like to apply, please contact Mike Greener on 07752 403 409 or [m.greener@berwick-tc.gov.uk](mailto:m.greener@berwick-tc.gov.uk) or leave your details at the Berwick upon Tweed Town Council Office

## Cleaning Marygate

As a council we take seriously our duty to listen to residents. We also take seriously our duty to manage the limited resources we have. Sometimes the two things can come into conflict.

It isn't the Town Council's duty to keep the streets clean. That duty, a limited duty, rests with Northumberland County Council. Whatever that means, it doesn't mean that we can pass by on the other side when residents and visitors alike tell us that the streets are desperately in need of cleaning. If that's the case, we have to try to work co-operatively.

When a prolonged dry spell earlier this month led to a rise in complaints that the streets needed cleaning, we had to

decide what to do. Should we point the finger, and try and direct the blame elsewhere? We chose to make two responses: one short term, one longer term.

The short-term response was to get a local contractor who we knew did good work to start the process of cleaning away the film of bird mess and other litter that was making the streets look dirty. It was one of those occasions when it mattered most to get the work in progress and worry about the explanations later. The longer-term plan was to talk to experts about what kit would be required, and how it can be delivered and used, to regularly keep the streets clean. That's the bit we're working on now, and we hope to have

Contact the Town Council at [info@berwick-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@berwick-tc.gov.uk), telephone 01289 302391, or pop into our office on Marygate, open to the public 10am-4pm, Monday to Friday.

If you want to contact Northumberland County Council you can speak to someone in person at the Library on Walkergate on Tuesday and Friday mornings or telephone on 0345 600 6400