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Kingsbridge
Town Council
Quarterly
Newsletter

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Town Mayor's Christmas Message...

It is now some eight months since I received the great honour of being elected Mayor. During these months I have been overwhelmed by the support I have received both from councillors and members of the public alike, and I must express the thanks of both my wife and myself for all the help that has been given to us. For my part, I promise that I will continue in my endeavours to help local good causes whenever asked.

I know it has been often said that we are lucky to live in such a lovely town, surrounded as we are, by beautiful countryside. When you read of the problems of other towns it makes one realise just how peaceful and safe we are in Kingsbridge, and long may it remain so. There is, however, always room for improvement.

I would dearly love to see progress in resolving one particular situation in the



coming year – getting the different generations in the town to find ways to work more closely together. By trying to understand each other's points of view, and accepting that there must be compromise, we stand a better chance of satisfying the many diverse needs in the community.

The British people are renowned for their tolerant nature and I am sure that, with good will and mutual understanding, we can achieve harmony for the benefit of all.

May I wish you all, young and old alike, a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Councillor Bob Freeman



David Thorning has been highly commended after being nominated for the prestigious Beacon Prize for his work with older people.

The Beacon Fellowship is a nationally recognised scheme through which the charity sector can acknowledge and reward exceptional philanthropic acts. It awards the Beacon Prize to individuals who are an inspiration to others in the way that they give; be it time, leadership, money or expertise.

David was nominated in the Lifetime Achievement

Councillor David Thorning is awarded commendation

category for his work with older people – and, in particular, his work in raising over £400,000 to provide a new building for the Rest Centre and Age Concern in Kingsbridge.

He said: "Raising the money for the two charities was only made possible through grants from some fifty national and local trusts, donations from other trusts and charities all over the country, and the generosity and goodwill of local people. Many local clubs and societies in Kingsbridge and the surrounding areas also played a great part."

"In an almost impossibly difficult process, with many hundreds of outstanding nominations, David Thorning's achievements

stood out as exceptional" commented Emily Stonor, Chief Executive of Beacon.

"We congratulate all our Highly Commended candidates – reaching the final shortlist is a considerable mark of recognition for their achievement."

David was 'both surprised and honoured' to win the award and would like to thank whoever it was who made the nomination.



bits 'n' pieces

■ **Devon County Council's Registrar services (for births and deaths) has recently moved out of Quay House to the Age Concern building opposite.**

■ **A French Market has been approved by the council to be held on the Town Square in late spring 2005.**

■ **The National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners regional representative recently viewed the council allotments, checked paperwork, chatted to plot holders and made some very favourable comments during his visit.**

■ **A Mission Statement has recently been adopted by the town council: 'To promote and develop the well-being of our community through working together.'**

■ **The Council's Reception Office now issues Devon-wide bus passes and provides various travel information leaflets for the whole of the South Hams.**

■ **Christmas lights in the town centre are funded each year by the town council and local businesses.**

■ **The Planning Committee is a new initiative by the town council to enable councillors to spend quality time considering planning applications outside of everyday council business. Any recommendations are forwarded to the next full council meeting for approval.**

Community Policing

Community policeman, Steve Bond, reports a downward trend in crime

During the last 18 months I have had great pleasure in serving the community of Kingsbridge. My position as Neighbourhood Beat Manager - your community policeman, presents many challenges while also providing great job satisfaction. I work with a dedicated team of police officers who are all committed to improving the quality of life in the area in which we serve.

I can report that recorded crime in Kingsbridge is showing a 13% reduction in the first half of 2004 when compared to the same period last year as the following figures detail:

	2003	2004
Violent Crime	46	38
Dwelling Burglary	5	4
Other Burglary	10	8
Vehicle Crime	33	14
Other Theft	37	62*
Other Criminal Damage	53	34
Total	184	160

*includes 30 ATM offences



I can confidently say that these statistics accurately represent a downward trend in local crime, thanks to targeted policing and a positive approach to anti-social behaviour.

I look forward to continuing my work with the Kingsbridge community, and wish you all a safe and enjoyable Christmas.

PC Steve Bond

Who is your Citizen of the Year for 2005?

This year marked the inaugural presentation of the town council's award of 'Citizen of the Year' to Jean Stephenson. Jean was recognised for her sterling work to the community and, in particular, her volunteer work at Age Concern.

The search is now on for another equally deserving person for next year's award. We are looking for someone who works away behind the scenes and deserves a 'pat on the back' for a job well done. If you know of someone who fits this picture we want to hear from you, but please gain their permission first.

Collect application forms from Quay House or phone 01548.853296. The closing date for nominations is Friday, 11 February 2005. The Mayor will present the award at the council's annual civic dinner on Friday, 4 March 2005. The award excludes members of the council and individuals who have received payment for council work and their immediate families.

QUIRKY COUNCIL FACTS

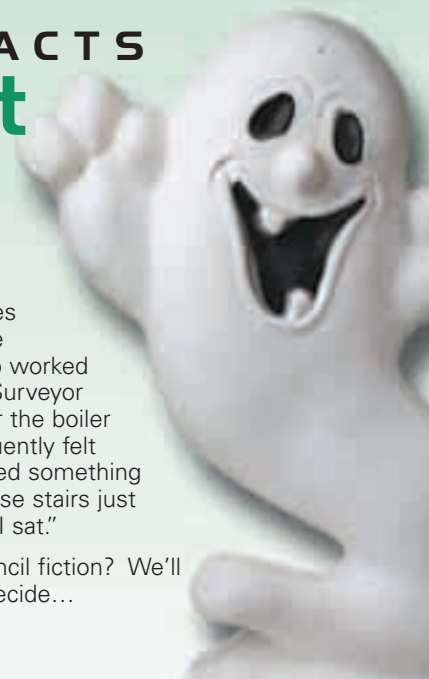
The Council Ghost

Many government offices are housed in very old buildings so tales of ghosts abound, and Kingsbridge is no exception. In the days of the urban district council the council offices used to be situated at number 20 Fore Street. The property has historical connections with Buckfast Abbey and is now used as a solicitor's office.

Joan Pearce recounts that Harry the caretaker saw a ghost on a number of occasions. A headless nun used to trudge up the stairs, from the boiler room, followed by her faithful old dog. "It fair made me hair stand on end, 'twas proper scary," said Harry.

When it was dark, and the wind rattled the slates and whistled through the eaves, many strange noises echoed through the building. Joan, who worked in the Engineer & Surveyor offices directly over the boiler room, said: "I frequently felt uneasy and imagined something was coming up those stairs just underneath where I sat."

Council fact or council fiction? We'll leave it to you to decide...



diary of events

Saturday 4th & Sunday 19th December – Farmers' Markets
On the Town Square; time to stock up the larder ready for your yuletide guests.

Saturday 4th December – St Nick's Fair At Quayside Leisure Centre – there's a stall for everyone.

Sunday 12th December – Civic Service The Town Mayor, Councillor Bob Freeman, will be holding his annual civic service at Dodbrooke Parish Church on Sunday 12th December at 10.00 a.m. Car parking will be available at Kingsbridge Community Primary School and refreshments will be served in the church hall after the service. All are welcome.

Sunday 19th December – Community Carol Service The Mayor along with local children and musicians will be taking part in a traditional carol service at Kingsbridge Evangelical Church on Sunday 19th December at 3 pm. The service will be in support of Children's Hospice South West.

'Grant Aid' - grants for the community

An opportunity for local community projects to apply for money from the town council

Each year the town council awards small grants to organisations which actively involve the local community in recreational, social or cultural pursuits. This year grants helped to pay for a coffee-making machine, install a telephone line, kitchen tiling and sports equipment for various clubs and societies. Contact the town council for application forms and conditions for next year's grants. Completed forms, with supporting documentation, to be submitted by Friday 11 March 2005.



Know Your Councillor Tony Child

Tony Child has served the council and people of Kingsbridge for seventeen years, first as Town Clerk, and for the last three years as Town Councillor. He was appointed Town Clerk on 1st April 1984, but is quick to point out that the choice of date was purely coincidental.

Tony's previous career was in education, much of it overseas. After two years' National Service, most of it served in Singapore, he graduated from University College, Exeter, and taught in Essex for five years, during which time he had the good fortune (or was it foresight?) to marry a young lady from Devon.

Then it was off to the British Solomons Training College on the remote island of Guadalcanal in the Pacific Ocean, where he worked for twenty years. In 1978, he retired as Chief Education Officer, and was awarded the MBE for his service to education in the Solomon Islands. Since then he has worked at an international college in Gloucestershire, and at the Plymouth College of Further Education.

He says: "I am lucky to have enjoyed immense job satisfaction, and feel that my efforts were of some benefit to the children, students or townfolk for whom I was working. As a town councillor and volunteer adviser for Kingsbridge Age Concern, I am still endeavouring to be useful."

Current useful endeavours include being Hon. Treasurer of Kingsbridge Age Concern, Hon. Treasurer of Kingsbridge Community Transport, Chairman of No.10 Group Royal Observer Corps Association, and S.W. Area Representative of the Pacific Islands Society of the U.K. and Ireland.

"Like many people, I am sad that a few individuals seem to want to spoil our town by criminal damage. I am also sad that, as elsewhere, the volunteer spirit is apparently waning, and it is increasingly difficult to find people prepared to give up some of their time to work as committee members of voluntary organisations. Nevertheless, Kingsbridge is still a very pleasant place to live and work and deserves the title 'The Jewel of the South Hams!'"

Local Democracy Week

The Mayor goes back to school

'Making Your Mark' was the theme of this year's Local Democracy Week (18-24 October). The annual event aims to get young people interested in the political process and decision-making at national and local levels; only thirty nine per cent of 18-24 year olds voted in the last general election.

A 'Take Your Councillor To School Day' encouraged local councils to meet the younger members of the community and discover which local issues mattered to them.

Mayor, Bob Freeman, and town clerk, Martin Johnson, met Year 11 Community College students during their Citizenship studies. During the session Bob explained how the local council fits in to the bigger picture, and explained why local democracy is so important.

Martin said: "Initially the students gave the thumbs down to the mere mention of politics, but as soon as particular issues came to the fore, such as foxhunting or the Euro, everyone had an opinion."

The students said they were keen to see a wide range of improvements to the area, including the need for a better bus service for outlying villages, and more meeting places for younger people. Other concerns included litter on the streets and the dirty state of the estuary at low tide.



how to contact your councillor

KINGSBRIDGE EAST

Cllr. Rufus Gilbert
Washbrook Farm
Dodbrooke
Kingsbridge TQ7 1NN
01548 856659

Cllr. Eric Heavisides
13 Higher Warren Road
Kingsbridge TQ7 1LH
01548 853536

Cllr. Lesley Hurrell
27 Rack Park Road
Kingsbridge TQ7 1DQ
01548 853528

Cllr. Eric Johnson
16 Linhey Close
Kingsbridge TQ7 1LL
01548 856171

Cllr. David Thorning
14 Linhey Close
Kingsbridge TQ7 1LL
01548 856024

KINGSBRIDGE NORTH

Cllr. Bob Freeman (Mayor)
9 Beechwood Drive
Kingsbridge TQ7 1RR
01548 854068

Cllr. Rev. Derek Hill
9 Windsor Road
Kingsbridge TQ7 1BX
01548 857601

Cllr. Dennis Holwill
(Deputy Mayor)
6 Green Close
Kingsbridge TQ7 1NH
01548 856452

Cllr. Ken Prowse
15 Northville Park
Kingsbridge TQ7 1AR
01548 857075

Cllr. Keith Wingate
Nippers Rest
Waterloo Place
Duncombe Street
Kingsbridge TQ7 1LX
01548 857513

KINGSBRIDGE WESTVILLE

Cllr. Tony Child
5 Hillside Drive
Kingsbridge TQ7 1JT
01548 856524

Cllr. John Cowling
18 Linhey Close
Kingsbridge TQ7 1LL
01548 853876

Cllr. Beryl Washington
Bridg Meadow
Kingsway Park
Kingsbridge
TQ7 1HJ
01548 856395

The Meadow Project, Combe Royal, Kingsbridge

Combe Royal was one of Kingsbridge's best kept secrets – until now. Situated on the outskirts of town, Combe Royal house stands in ten acres of grounds with a horticultural history that spans nearly two centuries.

The house itself was built in the early 1800s and was in private ownership until Devon County Council's Social Services took it over in 1989. From the time the house was built, the grounds were planted with a rich variety of exotic plants and trees.

The following passage is taken from the 'Journal of Horticulture and Cottage Gardener' in 1871: 'We saw specimens of cycas, huge bushes of camellias, bamboos from the Himalayas. The successful culture of the trees of the citrus family is a peculiarity of Combe Royal, as it is believed that the luxuriance and fruitfulness of the trees cannot be equalled in England...the orange trees often produce enormous fruit, several having attained 17, 18 or 19 inches in circumference.'

Nowadays, the grounds are still a beautiful resource, with a host of wildlife, bat boxes, willow art forms, a duck pond, goats, woodland walks, bird hides, greenhouses and allotments.

And who keeps all this in good order? Well that's the problem – such a special place needs a huge amount of management and tender loving care. There aren't enough helping hands and resources to keep up or make the most of the estate. The county council uses the house as offices, but can't maintain the grounds.

Groups such as the Ropewalk Resource Centre and the conservation charity BTCV play a part, but more help is required – and that's where The Meadow Project comes in.

Formed by Ali Calvert and Katie Edwards some 18 months ago, the Meadow Project trust aims to conserve Combe Royal's special environment. Along with a small group of enthusiasts, they beaver away in the gardens and meadow, and badger organisations for funding and help.

Ali says: "My vision is that this becomes a community project for the townspeople of Kingsbridge.

"Working in the grounds of Combe Royal gives tremendous rewards – you get a real sense of satisfaction at seeing your handiwork blossom in front of your eyes. It doesn't have to be hard work, we can find something for everyone to do."

If any local groups or individuals want to lend a hand and are able to offer a few hours of their time then please contact Ali or Katie on 01548 853163.



Kingsbridge Town Council Contact Details:

Quay House, Ilbert Road, Kingsbridge TQ7 1TZ. Telephone/Fax No. 01548 853296.

E-mail: mail@kingsbridge.net Website: www.kingsbridge.net. Opening hours: 9.30am-1pm, Mon-Fri. Town Clerk - Martin Johnson.

The town council meets in the council chamber at Quay House on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7pm, except during August. All meetings are open to the public, and start with a public forum when Kingsbridge electors can ask questions or make statements.

Minutes of all the town council meetings are available at Quay House and on the community website.