



June
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NEWS UPDATE

The
Newsletter
of Felixstowe
Town Council

TOWN TALK

Annual Report by the Mayor of Felixstowe, Councillor Mike Deacon 2012 - 2013

This is an abridged version of the Mayor's Annual Report to the Town Council, with the full report available at www.felixstowe.gov.uk

It has been a privilege and honour to have been the Mayor of Felixstowe. During my acceptance speech last year, I commented that I thought there would be many challenging decisions we would have to make as a Council during the ensuing year. I was absolutely right.

Major planning applications have been dealt with against a backdrop of ongoing difficult economic conditions for High Street retailers. Felixstowe Town Council has been consulted on a number of contentious planning applications for superstores, which is ongoing. Suffolk Coastal District Council will ultimately decide the outcome. An application has been approved to restore and re-open Felixstowe Pier – this is an ambitious project which will result in a large scale investment in an iconic structure. Work is well underway on the South Seafront development.

Lots of changes have taken place due to budgetary pressures on the County Council and the District Council. Some services have been reviewed and it has been decided by those authorities that they are either to be reduced or closed as in the case of the Spa Pavilion which marked a low spot in my mayoral year. The District Council continues to market the theatre. Felixstowe Town Council's Community Fund has supported services under threat and to date they include funding for floral planting along the seafront and at the Triangle, funding to support open access Youth Clubs popular with young people, funding to support the Felixstowe/Harwich/Shotley Foot Ferry (in addition to also providing financial support to the Felixstowe/Bawdsey Foot Ferry). It has also indicated its support for Felixstowe Library, which is now managed under different arrangements at Suffolk County Council, and for the decorative lighting along Felixstowe Promenade, known and loved by many local residents and visitors.

Coastal defence work, co-ordinated by Suffolk Coastal District Council, has improved sea defences along a wide stretch of the town's coastline.

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee year was very busy. We planted a commemorative tree, attended luncheons, tea parties, patriotic concerts and a Church Service at St John's. All this culminated in the lighting of a beacon on the cliff tops, an event organised by Felixstowe Lions. In connection with the Jubilee, we were privileged to attend the Royal Garden Party at Sandringham. We also attended a special Jubilee Evensong at Bury St Edmunds Cathedral.

The Olympic Torch came to Felixstowe on probably the best day of the year – the sun shone and the crowds came. Never have I seen so many people in Felixstowe, all in a party mood. And then there was Tom. Tom was a torch bearer and has Downs Syndrome. I had the pleasure of meeting him and his parents during the event. A few days later I received a letter from Tom's parents thanking me and the people of Felixstowe for making him so welcome. They felt that Tom could not have been made more welcome in any other town. It was very poignant that on this day the funeral took place of

Stan Cox, Felixstowe's oldest Olympian. He took part in both the London Games of 1948 and the Helsinki Games of 1952.



Felixstowe in Flower was again very successful and I would like to express my grateful thanks to all who continue to support it by entering competitions and sponsorship. The floral displays brightened up the town on what was quite a dull summer.

Felixstowe Carnival took place on a lovely sunny weekend with many people lining the streets to welcome the procession and enjoying the carnival atmosphere. Congratulations are due to the organising committee for their hard work.

During the year work started on the new Academy building in the grounds of what was the Orwell High School in Walton. We have attended various concerts, drama productions and art and photographic exhibitions at the school and have been really impressed by the standard of the students' work. We were invited to spend a morning at the Maidstone Campus being escorted around by the Head Girl. We visited several classes and even took part in a French lesson! We had lunch with the students and again were made very welcome and came away very impressed.

As always Christmas is an exciting time albeit very busy for us this year. We visited twenty residential and nursing homes, saw nativity plays at an infant school and a nursery and were invited to several Christmas Fairs. With the help of our grandchildren and children from the Infant and Junior Schools in my Ward, we turned on the Christmas Lights. Thanks must go to the Lions Club for once again putting on such a magnificent display and also to the many sponsors. I must add here that we were invited to the Lions' workshop where the lights are stored, repaired and enhanced year after year. On this particular day John Merrett retired as the Lighting Manager. We presented John with a town plaque and his wife with a bouquet of flowers.

Christmas Day dawned and we were on the beach at 10am to launch the annual Christmas Day Dip in aid of the St Elizabeth Hospice. 500 swimmers took part, one even proposed to his girlfriend prior to diving into the sea. Fortunately she accepted! We visited the Community Hospital and the Salvation Army where lunch was being prepared and served to those who otherwise would be on their own.

The whole year had a distinctly international flavour. We attended a meeting of the Felixstowe International Women's Club for a Hungarian celebration.

We were invited to a BBQ with visitors from Rouillac in France and later entertained them to tea and cakes at the Town Hall. I can report that the English hosts from Felixstowe who organised the visit will be making a return visit later this year. A Salvation Army Band from Stockholm in Sweden came to Felixstowe and performed an impromptu concert in the town centre and then marched to the Town Hall for tea and cakes. Children from Chernobyl were hosted by



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Felixstowe Lions for a day by the sea. These children, because of the nuclear power station tragedy some years' ago, suffer from a very low immune system and a month away from their home helps improve this. In Chernobyl there is still a very high rate of cancer in children. They had a wonderful time on the beach, in the water and enjoyed a lunch in The Hut and seaside attractions. Many thanks again to the Lions and local business people that made this happen. Almost traditionally Fire Cadets from Wesel came to the Town Hall for breakfast during their stay here. Reciprocal visits were made to both Wesel and Salzwedel, our twin and partnership towns in Germany. The Town's Rifle Club hosted an Olympic shooter who trained here prior to the Games. She and her coach from Uzbekistan and members of the Rifle Club visited the Town Hall, again for tea and cakes!

A young Dutch football team visited the town last month to compete in an annual tournament organised by Felixstowe and Walton United Football Club. I presented the awards at a lively reception at the Town Ground. As you can see, as a town we have many international connections.

Remembrance Day as always was well attended both at Trinity Methodist Church and at the War Memorial. It has to be noted how many young people took part in this very moving occasion.

The end of January saw the 60th Anniversary of the 1953 East Coast Floods - floods in which 41 Felixstowe residents perished. The flood memorial was re-dedicated and a Service of Remembrance took place at the Salvation Army in Cobbold Road. Hearing the memories of the survivors was very moving. Thanks to Ian Heeley, his friends and the Churches involved for organising these events.

During the course of the year we have visited many organisations in the town that cater for our young people, most noticeably and not in any order of importance, they are: Level 2, the Hockey Club who have 250 youngsters on their books, Felixstowe & Walton United Football Club who have 300, the Suffolk Coastal Torpedoes (a water polo club) who meet at the Leisure Centre and the Scouting and Guiding Fraternities. We have visited the Beaver Scout colony in Bath Road who celebrated

their 20th anniversary, only to find pictures of ourselves as Mayor and Mayoress at their inaugural meeting in 1993.

Amongst other Felixstowe highlights during the year were Art on the Prom and the Heritage Weekend organised by the Felixstowe Society. Our thanks must go to the organisers of both these wonderful events. We helped celebrate 100th birthdays with five incredible ladies. We have spent several interesting days/evenings at events organised by the Felixstowe Lions and the two Rotary Clubs of Felixstowe. We have really been staggered by the amount of voluntary work that keeps the wheels of Felixstowe moving.

Outside of Felixstowe we attended civic services, receptions and fund-raising events for mayors and civic leaders of other Suffolk Authorities.

The annual Vintage Car Rally took place on the May Bank Holiday Weekend with over 500 vehicles taking part and drawing thousands of visitors into the town. The May Day Fun Run was a huge success organised by the Rotary Club with over 600 runners taking part, which included myself.

Our Civic events included the Civic Service at St Andrews Church, the Civic Reception here at the Town Hall and the Civic Carol Service at St Mary's Walton.

I thank all those councillors and the people of Felixstowe who supported Annie and I on these occasions.

The Annual Civic Awards Ceremony took place in May with six recipients of the Mayor's Award, the Ganges Youth Award and the Organisation Award being presented. I also presented my two charities, Level 2 and FACTS, with their cheques. We raised the magnificent sum of £15,100 and therefore I was able to present each of them with a cheque for £7,550 – a wonderful achievement I'm sure you will agree in these times of such austerity. Both charities worked extremely hard and thoroughly deserved this boost to their finances.

Thank you to the people of Felixstowe who made us so welcome wherever we went.

HOW TO CONTACT US

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Email: caroline.barrett@felixstowe.gov.uk
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Officials of the Council:

Town Clerk: Mrs Caroline Barrett

Technical Advisor: Mrs Rosemary Jones

WHEN WE MEET

The Full Council meets at 7.30pm.

Feel free to come along to our meetings to see and hear what issues we are talking about. There is a public question time at the start of each meeting so that you can let us know your views on Felixstowe issues.

Forthcoming meetings:

5th June 2013 & 14th August 2013
at Felixstowe Town Hall

WHAT WE DO...

Some services the Town Council provides:

- Allotments • Felixstowe in Flower
- Cemetery • Broadway House and Walton Community Hall
- Felixstowe Town Hall Lettings • Youth Forum
- Civic occasions and Flood Memorial
- Grant Support to Local Organisations



• Weddings and Civil Partnerships

Enjoy your Civil Ceremony or Civil Partnership at Felixstowe Town Hall.

For further information,
please contact

celia.page@felixstowe.gov.uk

Some of what we do in partnership:

- Consultation on planning applications
- Highways matters/transport issues
- Town Centre Management/Libraries
 - Safer neighbourhoods
 - Felixstowe Futures
- Twinning, Christmas Lighting
- Play area/sports facilities



On Sunday 4 August 2013, Felixstowe will be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Sea Planes in Felixstowe and the event is entitled "Wings on Waves". Following a Church Service at 11am and Parade,

at 12.30pm, an Air Display will take place at 3pm (weather permitting) over the sea, opposite the Town Hall, which includes a Catalina flying boat, sponsored by the Port of Felixstowe.

Remember ...

We want to hear your views. Please let us know by telephone or email, using the contacts shown on this page.